



DREAMWORKS ANIMATION and PEARL STUDIO Present

ABOMINABLE

CHLOE BENNET
TENZING NORGAY TRAINOR
ALBERT TSAI
EDDIE IZZARD
SARAH PAULSON
TSAI CHIN
MICHELLE WONG

Executive Producers
TIM JOHNSON
FRANK ZHU
LI RUIGANG

Co-Director
TODD WILDERMAN

Co-Producer
REBECCA HUNTLEY

Producer
PEILIN CHOU

Produced by
SUZANNE BUIRGY, p.g.a.

Written and Directed by
JILL CULTON

PRODUCTION INFORMATION

DreamWorks Animation and Pearl Studio's co-production **Abominable** takes audiences on an epic 2,000-mile adventure from the streets of China to the breathtaking Himalayan snowscapes.

When teenage Yi (CHLOE BENNET, Marvel's *Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* TV series) stumbles upon a young Yeti on the roof of her apartment building, she and her friends, Jin (TENZING NORGAY TRAINOR, TV's *Liv and Maddie*), and his cousin, Peng (ALBERT TSAI, TV's *Fresh Off the Boat*), name him "Everest" and embark on an unforgettable quest to reunite the magical creature with his family at the highest point on Earth.

Saying goodbye to Yi's mom (MICHELLE WONG, *Dear White People*) and grandmother, Nai Nai (TSAI CHIN, *The Joy Luck Club*), the trio of friends will have to stay one step ahead of Burnish (EDDIE IZZARD, *Victoria & Abdul*), a ridiculously wealthy financier intent on capturing a Yeti much like the one he stumbled upon as a boy, and Dr. Zara (SARAH PAULSON, *Glass*), the zoologist trying to keep the wild creature out of her patron's greedy hands, to help Everest (vocalized by JOSEPH IZZO, *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*) get home and rejoin his family.

As the journey of their lifetimes becomes a flat-out race to the finish, Everest will help Yi, Jin and Peng unlock an inner bravery they didn't know they had and—as they strive to return the mystical creature to the place where he belongs—Everest will help them discover where they truly belong, too.

Abominable, the first female-led, major-studio animated film with a central female character, is written and directed by JILL CULTON (*Open Season*, *Monsters, Inc.*, *Toy Story 2*) and produced by SUZANNE BUIRGY, p.g.a. (*Kung Fu Panda 2*, *Home*). PEILIN CHOU (*Kung Fu Panda 3*, *Mulan*) produces for Pearl Studio. The epic 3D adventure is executive produced by TIM JOHNSON (*Over the Hedge*, *Home*, *ANTZ*), FRANK ZHU (*Checked In*, *Lotus Code*) and LI RUIGANG (*Kung Fu Panda 3*, *The Taking of Tiger Mountain*). The production is co-directed by TODD WILDERMAN (*Trolls*, *The Croods*) and co-produced by REBECCA HUNTLEY (*Home*, *How to Train Your Dragon 2*).

Culton leads an accomplished behind-the-scenes crew of DreamWorks Animation masters and filmmaking creatives, including head of layout ROBERT CRAWFORD (*How to Train Your Dragon* series, *Rise of the Guardians*), production designer MAXWELL BOAS (*Shrek Forever After*, *Kung Fu Panda 3*), art director PAUL DUNCAN (*The Croods*, *Shrek Forever After*), visual effects supervisor MARK EDWARDS (*The Peanuts Movie*, *The Croods*), lead editor PAM ZIEGENHAGEN (*Open Season*, *Despicable Me*), head of story ENNIO TORRESAN (*The Boss Baby*, *Turbo*), final layout supervisor DAVID PATRICK VALERA (*How to Train Your Dragon*, *Puss in Boots*), head of character animation JOHN HILL (*Trolls*, *Puss in Boots*), character effects supervisor DAMON RIESBERG (*Trolls*, *Megamind*), modeling supervisor JEFFREY HAYES (*Home*, *Shrek*), surfacing supervisor ELIZABETH CONNORS, head of effects JEFF BUDSBERG (*The Croods*, *Shrek Forever After*), character TD supervisor SANDY KAO (*How to Train Your Dragon*, *Shrek Forever After*), head of lighting MICHAEL NECCI (*Kung Fu Panda 2*, *Bee Movie*), supervising technical director JENNIFER PAN, digital supervisor MUNIRA TAYABJI (*Home*, *Kung Fu Panda*), stereoscopic supervisor GAREN CALAC (*Kung Fu Panda 3*, *Captain Underpants: The First Epic Movie*) and composer RUPERT GREGSON-WILLIAMS (*Wonder Woman*, *Aquaman*).

Abominable will be released by Universal Pictures worldwide beginning September 27, 2019. In China, the film will be distributed by Pearl Studio.

THE BACKSTORY

Open Your Heart a Little

***Abominable* Begins**

For *Abominable* writer/director Jill Culton, the road to DreamWorks Animation has been a long and winding one. After she graduated from CalArts, she cut her teeth as an animator and storyboard artist at Pixar, where she collaborated on *Toy Story*, *Toy Story 2* and *A Bug's Life* before helping to craft the story for *Monster's, Inc.* As well, she spent several years at Sony Animation, where she directed their first animated-feature film, *Open Season*. Culton had met with DreamWorks over the years to discuss various

projects, but it was not until she was swept away at an early screening of *How to Train Your Dragon* that everything clicked into place and she decided to join the studio.

Oriental DreamWorks, the company that later became Pearl Studio, and DreamWorks Animation pitched Culton the idea for a “Yeti movie,” and she took the seed of that idea back to her home in a small town nestled in the woods of Marin County in Northern California. There, surrounded by majestic redwoods, she began to imagine an epic tale of a young woman who finds herself at an unimaginable crossroads.

“When you have a blank slate like that to play with, you tend to fill it in with what you know and love,” Culton says. Turns out her greatest inspirations were also her largest. “I’ve had huge, 90-pound-plus dogs for most of my life. They are my kids; I’ve had bloodhounds mostly, and they’re sloppy, slobbery and hilarious. I could just see myself connecting through the relationship that Yi has with the Yeti, and I drew the initial sketches of them together. I initially wanted him to be huge, like the kind of dogs I’ve had. Additionally, all my love for nature got poured into this—including my experiences camping and traveling. My dad loves the outdoors, and that was a big deal for our family growing up.”

The massive contrast in size between the Yeti, Everest, and Yi was inspired by a very specific memory from Culton’s childhood. “When I was five or six, my neighbors had this giant London Great Dane that had to be almost 200 pounds,” she says. “I was always scared but intrigued; he outweighed me by more than double. One day, my friend Nancy and I were running around the house, and he started chasing us. I jumped off the stairs to avoid him, and I fell. This giant dog pinned me to the ground and was breathing in my face, staring into me; I was terrified but amazed at the same time. Since then, I’ve only had big dogs. They’re just this huge, fascinating presence in my world.”

Culton has always been passionate about the emotion that a musical score brings to a film, a love of which she’s brought into the medium of hand-drawn art. Culton knew that she needed music to play a central role in *Abominable*. Yi is a violinist and often uses music to express feelings she cannot put into words, and Everest possesses a nature-based magic with musical undertones. “I wanted Yi and Everest to travel the

world to all these beautiful places outside a big city; that narrative connected to me,” Culton says. “I play guitar and piano and absolutely love music.”

Violin, however? That was a beast entirely new to her. She laughs: “All the early drawings I started sketching of Yi—where she’s holding the violin completely wrong—were some of the first ones I did. I’d have her doing everything from riding on top of Everest to standing on a rooftop. I just kept drawing her with a violin with the bright lights and glass buildings of the city as she played...such a hard image and romantic at the same time.

“I started asking myself, ‘What could her violin have to do with Everest himself?’ Culton continues. “I wanted a bit of magic, so I thought about how mystics have that chanting hum. I knew Everest and Yi could connect on that level. Growing up, my favorite Disney movies were the ones where there wasn’t a lot of talking. I was hell-bent on not having our Yeti speak, but rather communicate like a dog does—more intuitively with her.”

That idea resonated with producer Suzanne Buirgy. What Yi, and audiences, will later discover is that the hair of the Yeti and Yi’s violin connect on a magical, almost mystical level. “That’s integral to a kid watching the film and thinking, ‘I may not have magic Yeti strings, but somewhere in me, I have that magic in me...I can make things happen,’” Buirgy says. “That’s how Yi’s able to save him: the power of creativity.”

Culton also wanted the story to explore themes of deep love and loss in an honest and direct way. As the story begins, Yi’s father has died and Everest is lost, separated from his family and unable to find his way home. In her own life, Culton’s most poignant memories are also accompanied by her most painful, and she knew that for audiences to connect with Yi, she had to address that pain head-on, not shy away from it. “There’s always been a thread in this movie where this violin belongs to Yi’s dad, who passed away,” Culton says. “While I don’t have a personal death like that in my family, when I was a teenager, my dad left the family. My parents got a divorce, and it was devastating. I can relate to Yi’s loss on that level...especially how she’s disconnected from her family. When you’re a kid going through a difficult divorce and your parents want to ‘sit down and talk about this...’ you’re like, ‘No! I don’t want to talk

about it!' Nobody does. That reality of a teenager going through something devastating that's changing the family is very real and personal to me."

As she wrote, Culton wove the tale of an independent 16-year-old who has lost her father and has grown disconnected from her mother and grandmother, who are trying to get Yi to open up and rejoin the family. The filmmaker wanted Yi to be feisty and independent, a tomboy who's not quite ready to reveal her true pain. "I certainly was like her when I was younger," Culton says. "She feels like she doesn't need anyone."

Yi discovers Everest on her roof at a critical juncture in her life, when she is beginning to see that she needs to reconnect with others. Because Everest is leagues away from his own home in the Himalayas and desperately needs her help, Yi learns to open her heart a crack and decides to take him back to where he belongs. "Yi meets Everest on the rooftop when he wakes up as she's playing her violin," Buirgy says. "Jill long had a picture in her head of Yi standing on the rooftop, with the lights of the city spread out before her."

When Culton began her story, she conceived of it as a journey with Everest and Yi alone, but as the story evolved over the years more characters were added. In 2015, the filmmaker paused her involvement in *Abominable* for a time to focus upon other projects. While she was on hiatus, executive producer and *Abominable* godfather Tim Johnson and Culton's longtime comrade-in-arms Todd Wilderman, who became the film's co-director, contributed narrative arcs that honored her vision.

"When I came back on the show [in 2017], I started thinking of it as not just Yi and Everest on an adventure like in *E.T.* but more of an ensemble story like *Stand by Me*, with a group of kids who must deal with each other, as well as with hard issues, as they go on this journey. Still, Everest is the core of changing their lives."

The realization for Yi that she's the principal person who can aid this Yeti is a gradual one, but her instinct to protect him is immediate. As Yi leads Everest back, he helps her understand how to go home herself. This emotional truth of the story is paramount to filmmakers. "I used to think of a story as a big puzzle," Culton says. "Now I think of it as a house of cards, where if you pull out key pillars, it could fall apart. When I sit down to plot out a script, I know to consider the physical cards, which is the journey

itself; I put down physical obstacles for those. If the cards are too easy, the audience will get bored. You absolutely have to have twists and turns.”

She pauses. “But then you have your emotional cards to play, the ones that tell you *why* the character is the way she is...the ones set up at the beginning. Yi is a headstrong teen who is distant from her family; the emotional cards lay out the ‘why’ she is that way. You have to parse that out, or you lose your drive. The plot is the drive, but so is the emotional journey. If you give it all away too soon, you have nowhere to go. We’ve given bits and pieces of Yi’s background out all along the way. If you hear a stranger is going through something tough, you feel bad for them. But if it’s someone you *know* well, you empathize with and emote for them. That is why it is important to save some emotional reveals for later in the film, after we know the characters. Those big revelations allow us to care about them and feel empathy for them.”

It was also critical to Culton that audiences not see Everest’s home on Mt. Everest until he, Yi, and the boys arrive there. We experience Mt. Everest for the first time at the same time Yi does. “You have to earn the awe at the end of the movie,” Culton says. “You want to go on this journey with them to the Himalayas. When we finally get there and that shot opens up and we see the beauty of them, we wanted the audience to gasp and go, ‘I’ve been waiting for this!’ just as the kids in the story are in awe.”

Trio of Powerhouse Women

Buirgy and Chou Join Culton

In bringing *Abominable* to life, Culton would find kindred spirits in producer Suzanne Buirgy, DreamWorks Animation’s longtime champion of the production, and Peilin Chou, chief creative officer of Pearl Studio and our story’s Yi writ large. Making history as the first trio of female filmmakers to bring a big-studio animated feature to the big screen, the collaborators did and do not take that historic designation lightly.

A performer who began her career in theater, Buirgy became a songwriter at the age of 10 and was in the first national tour of *Pirates of Penzance* through the New York Shakespeare Festival. Playing in bands to support herself, Buirgy got her first job in the film industry as an assistant at visual effects house Digital Domain and worked her way

up through the help of her mentor, the late Nancy Bernstein (*Rise of the Guardians*), who served as DreamWorks Animation's head of production.

After Bernstein came to the studio from Digital Domain, in 2005, the production head called Buirgy to join her on DreamWorks' Glendale, California, campus. Ready to say goodbye to the touring life of a musician, Buirgy wanted to start a family with her wife in L.A. "I could feel the creative energy on the DreamWorks campus," she notes. "I thought, 'This is a place where everything I bring to the table can be put into the mix.'"

Buirgy joined then production executive Jill Hopper (now DreamWorks Animation's head of global productions) more than 14 years ago on the campus. At the time, Buirgy says, she was "in charge of care and feeding of all artists—where they were going, putting them on the proper movies, listening to what they had to say and what they wanted. From deals on, I learned so much about the animation pipeline."

Over the years, these experiences would take Buirgy through the ranks to become producer of director Tim Johnson's *Home* for DreamWorks Animation, and for him to join her as executive producer on *Abominable*. "My career has come together in a fashion that is specifically my own, but also works well at DreamWorks," she says. Likewise, Buirgy and Culton share another mentor. "Bill Damaschke was in the creative role back then; just when we would get comfortable, he would move us on to something else. That kept us on our creative toes."

It was that "shake-it-up" style that allowed Buirgy to study every facet of the animation process. "I worked on preproduction of *How to Train Your Dragon* as an associate producer, supporting scheduling and budgeting," she says. "Then, I was onto *Kung Fu Panda 2* as co-producer. It was a great boot camp for budgeting and scheduling in this creative world. I served as a producer on *Home*, where I was involved in creative, as well as the music with Rihanna and J. Lo. That teed me up for the creative producer role on this movie."

Discussing her experience producing Culton, Buirgy says: "I've always believed that it's my job to usher through and execute a filmmaker's vision; Here, I hoped to make *Abominable* as good as it can be. I've made sure that Jill held onto her vision, while pushing the envelope so that she takes in information she could make her own.

It's a testament to Jill that we've been able to get her strong vision on the screen and that this movie is as beautiful as it is."

Buirgy also appreciates that the director has always been steadfast, never precious. "Jill's had this dedication to change throughout this process. You don't start with a script in animation; you start with an idea. She had an idea for the movie, and many things have happened that added to the work over the years. I'm thrilled that she was able to come back and complete that vision."

Buirgy's protection of the project was deeply valued by its creator. "Suzanne has navigated all the changes with the film, especially as new voices came into it," Culton says. "I so appreciate her being able to protect the core of what this film is. She genuinely loved it from the beginning, and you can feel that. It's so important to filmmakers when your producing partner is not only onboard but loves and gets the film, and is willing to protect it no matter what. That's big."

With the evolution of Oriental DreamWorks, which started as a DreamWorks Animation joint venture with China, and in recent years has separated from DreamWorks to become a new stand-alone multimedia company—now called Pearl Studio—*Abominable* grew from an auxiliary property to a co-production between the two companies. Buirgy admires that Pearl has "such a unique way of looking at things" and was able to bring such important insight into China while offering a unique and indispensable layer of creative collaboration to the DNA of the *Abominable* storyline, which crisscrosses and artistically showcases one of the world's biggest countries."

In turn, former Disney, Nickelodeon and Oriental DreamWorks' executive Peilin Chou, who now serves as the chief creative officer for Pearl Studio, was integral in Culton's 2017 return to the project. "Peilin has been a wonderful partner for us," Buirgy says. "Not only has she kept us on track, she worked with the art team at Pearl to bring authenticity to the movie."

The mission of Pearl Studio is to make global family films that have hyper-appeal in China, and Chou—key to *Kung Fu Panda*'s extensive Mandarin adaptation—believed *Abominable* was a perfect fit for that mission. She loved that the adventure was set in modern-day China and represented modern Chinese teens. "A great story is a great story no matter where you live, and this film has such wonderful universal appeal and

global playability,” Chou says. “Everyone can relate to the theme of finding your way home and the importance of family, and I believe these things will resonate particularly deeply with Chinese audiences. We have never seen a major studio release an animated film quite like this. We believe this film will also continue to move the needle for multicultural storytelling.”

Chou respected that Culton has the ability to tune out all the noise and laser-focus on her calling. “It’s a rare dynamic and a rare director that can take in all the various things people are saying but then get very quiet in their own head and put together something that’s even better than all the conversations,” Chou says. “Jill’s openness and collaboration are so unique, and the film has benefited from it tremendously. It’s also been wonderful to see her partnership with Suzanne and that dialogue has been so easy and open; there’s a lot of mutual respect.”

Chou also believes that this film is, in many ways, Culton’s destiny. “Jill was uniquely positioned to tell this story that is so personal to her, and she always believed she was meant to direct this film,” she says. “She has such an intensity toward it, that even during changes of leadership—and during a hiatus from the project when she was working on other movies—*Abominable* was still in the back of her mind. We never abandoned the project, and she never abandoned us. There’s this mysticism to her. She knew in her heart of hearts she was meant to bring this film to the screen. And she was right! Jill never gave up on it, and it came true. She’s like Everest; she showed us the way home.”

It’s also fair to say that no one on the *Abominable* production team feels closer to the heroine’s arc than Chou, who says that if she’d seen a character like Yi on screen when she was a girl it would’ve been life changing. “It would’ve meant everything,” Chou says. “I look back and realize now that so many people were having the same experience of feeling isolated when I was growing up. Yet, all of us are now connected by that experience we then thought was so singular. When you grow up and feel like an outsider, you feel like you’re going to have to change yourself so you fit in. My sister and I bleached our hair; we shunned everything that was Asian. I was embarrassed to take my mom’s meals to school that she made. You suppress who you are because you think that person is unacceptable and needs to be hidden, because they’ll never be

accepted in mainstream society. If I would've seen a movie with a heroine like Yi, I'd have thought, 'Hell yeah! That's me! That's awesome!' I love the fact that she exists in the world. The 10-year-old I was would maybe have thought about me differently."

The most recent female creative forces on *Abominable* have been MARGIE COHN, president of DreamWorks Animation, who rose to that position earlier this year after years of building the studio's TV empire, and KRISTIN LOWE, recently appointed chief creative officer for the studio, who moved over from Universal, where she served as executive vice president. "Margie has so much experience in both TV and features," Culton says. "She has such a unique lens into the work we do. And, Kristin has been such a big fan of ours. I have felt for quite a while that her quiet confidence and sense of big picture made our movie better. For her to step into this role was a natural fit; she's been a partner for this entire journey."

For Cohn, working with Culton and her team has been a highlight of her new tenure. "It was exciting to discover this team led by such formidable women working on a movie with such a fresh vision," Cohn says. "*Abominable* is a very personal movie for Jill and the crew she has assembled. The kids, with their relationships and actions, feel authentic and that gives the film emotional resonance. Along with breathtaking animation from talented artists at DreamWorks, the film is ambitious, visually stunning and heartfelt."

Partners in Crime

Co-director Todd Wilderman and EP Tim Johnson

Serving as Culton's co-pilot on this adventure has been *Abominable* co-director Todd Wilderman, whom she has known for more than two decades. "We've worked at the same studios on and off for many years," Culton says. "Todd was a lead animator when I was directing *Open Season*, and we collaborated on a small film called *Cats Don't Dance*. We're not only very close friends, we've also had many conversations about how he wanted the chance to be a director. For Todd to get the opportunity to be a co-director on this film with me is wonderful. I've gotten to see his whole journey from coming straight out of CalArts, where he was a couple years younger, to today. I'm so thrilled we get to do this with one another."

Wilderman was involved in all areas, from every big-story brainstorming session to the most minute of lines. “We did the movie side-by-side as sounding boards,” Culton says. “This was an original vision of mine and I was able to write the script, but Todd’s been the voice all along that I was able to bounce ideas off and come up with gags together in the middle of the night when we were giddy and tired. Todd is a fantastic animator and storyboard artist and took on projects when we couldn’t crack it with other folks. We did animation dailies together and served as a check-and-balance system to catch what the others didn’t.”

Wilderman, who spent almost 15 years at Sony Animation and joined DreamWorks Animation in 2011, loved how he and Culton worked together. “Jill and I partner really well and challenge each other in all sorts of ways to solve problems,” he says. “It’s wonderful to have a second person to workshop through things constantly. It’s been a heavy workload, and we’ve made decisions fast. We don’t divide and conquer; we go into everything together.”

Buirgy recognized the quiet strength of the Culton-Wilderman collaboration. “They’re both amazingly talented,” the producer says. “Todd is a brilliant story artist, and he is also such a steady being. He’s very present and was able to be such a good partner to Jill in helping her continually visualize what it was she was trying to do. She knew the story she wanted to tell, and she didn’t veer off that. That’s a gift when there is white noise. The beauty of what Jill did is that she was able to bring in outside input and make it her own...and still make it fit the vision of what she wanted to do. I have deep respect for both of them.”

Likewise, EP Johnson proved an invaluable partner as the production moved forward over the years. “Tim and I worked together on *Home* alongside Todd, and Tim was on this movie for a bit of time,” Buirgy says. “I always think of different people as being guardians of *Abominable* at any given moment. Tim brought in other characters that really enriched the narrative, and he has had amazing input on the film. He’s an incredibly exact storyteller, and he was brought on to add key characters with Todd and to expand the sense of magic. Characters evolved, but ultimately the story was Jill’s. When she came back, she brought those characters into her narrative. That made the

story bigger and better. She's been incredibly resourceful at figuring out how to turn her passion and vision into this film."

Johnson was inspired by the cross-cultural nature of *Abominable's* narrative. "The film is an interesting marriage between Western storytelling and a more Asian narrative," Johnson says. "We brought together this story of a magical Yeti with a team of kids on this adventure, and we wanted to make sure that the audience wanted to be on screen with the characters. The movie offers this appeal of an ancient, prehuman culture...the idea that Everest's kind have this primitive intelligence different from humanity. We loved the idea that the Yetis would be closer to nature and have this shamanistic nature with magic, and that Everest knew his own heart and the heart of others."

For Johnson, *Abominable* also explores the wisdom in animals that are companions to humans—a spirit that the team wanted to magnify and amplify. Indeed, the film stands out in its imagery and narrative, and that's what gives it a place in the studio's canon. "DreamWorks is an innovative visual world creator," Johnson says. "*Madagascar* looks different than *ANTZ*, which looks different from *How to Train Your Dragon*. Visually, *Abominable* sits wonderfully on the shelf of DreamWorks movies in that it generates its own unique world visually and has a beautiful, magical logic to it."

THE CHARACTERS

Abominable is about a dreamer, Yi, who is supported on her journey by a skeptic (Jin) and the ultimate child (Peng). As they struggle, and ultimately triumph, in their quest, they are buoyed by Yi's loving mother and grandmother Nai Nai, and are challenged by those with sinister or ulterior motives (Burnish and Dr. Zara). Ultimately, the narrative and the characters all relate to themes of disconnection and reconnection.

"Yi's known Jin since they were kids, but they, too, have become disconnected," Culton says. "Jin is into his friends and the way he looks, but he is concerned about Yi and ends up following her on this quest. His little cousin, Peng, comes along as well, and he's totally into the journey and the fun of finding a kindred spirit in Everest. Each of them changes, and Everest is responsible for those changes as well."

Yi

Chloe Bennet

When she was growing up, Culton didn't feel that pop culture, and movies in particular, understood her or even saw her. So as Culton imagined Yi, it was crucial to create a character who would have spoken to her as a girl. "While there were lots of princess movies growing up, I was a total tomboy," the filmmaker says. "My sister loved dressing up in pretty clothes, but I never wore makeup. I had holes in my jeans. I was always climbing trees, building a treehouse, surfing or skateboarding. I would watch these movies, and no female characters felt like me. What I love about Yi is that she's a strong-willed, strong-minded character who isn't afraid to get dirty. We're reversing the role play here, where Jin cares about his hair and getting dirty, while Yi is the exact opposite. She doesn't care about sleeping in the woods. It's not just a modern twist; we all know someone like that.

"I'm so glad we get to bring Yi to the world, as there are a lot of girls who can relate to her," Culton continues. "She's like me in that she leaps before she looks. I've gotten myself into a lot of trouble that way, but it's a great characteristic where you appreciate her ability to dive into adventure...no matter the cost. I also love the relationship between Everest and Yi. I always ask myself the central story question: 'Why did this Yeti come to this rooftop?'"

It was a query inspired by Culton's favorite film as a child, *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial*. "I would ask the same question: 'Why did E.T. land in Elliott's shed?'" Culton says. "Here it became, 'What does Everest bring Yi?' In the beginning, you feel like he's a victim in the city, and she has to take care of him. By the end, he's taking care of her. Still, the bigger arc is that, in the beginning, we think that he's just a scared creature that Yi takes care of; he's wounded. They're like Androcles and the Lion, where she helps him and they have a bond. As the journey goes forward, you realize that he's more than that. Of course, he has magic powers to control nature, but he also helps lead Yi to her own healing."

As a female character, Yi also upends expectations and erases boundaries. "In animation, there are so many princess stories and girly girls that are supposed to act and to be a certain way, but Yi is just her own person," Chou says. "We've evolved from

waiting for the prince in most of those, but there's this long history of that in entertainment. Yi is not like that, nor is she a reaction to that. She's unique in that she knows who she is, and she's very determined. She has a vision of her own path, and she's going to follow through with that, no matter what."

When it came to casting Yi, it was an easy choice for Culton, Buirgy and Chou. Chloe Bennet, best known for her work as Skye/Quake on Marvel's *Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.*, gave them everything they hoped Yi would be, and more. "Chloe has a great tone to her voice we all love," Culton says. "But more than anything, she's so willing to go to these incredibly vulnerable places. That's very difficult for any actor. She gets to be a superhero in *S.H.I.E.L.D.*, and this role gives her a lot of depth to play with; she was so ready and is so proud of this movie."

For Bennet, the role of Yi had unexpected echoes with her own life. "My agents called me and told me that DreamWorks and Pearl were doing this new film, and the character is a young Chinese girl who lives with her grandmother in China as a teenager," the actress says. "I also lived with my grandmother in China as a teenager. I thought, 'Well, that's a weird coincidence.' When I went in and talked with them and learned about the person Yi is, and how strong-willed she is, her journey resonated so deeply with me. It paralleled my life. I left that meeting and said, 'If I don't get this movie, I'm horrible at my job. That *is* me.' It felt almost too good to be true."

The coincidences between Bennet's life and Yi's didn't stop there. "It's all been a very destined process," she says. "I grew up with brothers in the city of Chicago, and they're similar to other characters in the film. I was so very similar to Yi, doing odd jobs like mobile lemonade stands and dog walking. I always felt like an outcast because I wasn't a girly girl and didn't know how to interact well outside of my own big family. I felt surrounded but isolated in a way that anyone who feels differently, especially teenagers, can feel."

The actress appreciated that Culton infused *Abominable* with surprising emotional weight, and she hopes that a character like Yi will become a touchstone for a generation of girls. "It's a funny, light-hearted adventure in a way, but *Abominable* has these serious undertones that are important themes—like loss and pain—for people of all ages to deal with," Bennet says. "A lot of people, especially teenagers, are scared to

reach out when things are hard. That's my favorite part of the film, and the one that resonates with me the most—and I hope it does for other girls as well."

One of Culton's favorite scenes to record with Bennet is one in which Yi and Jin are in a bamboo grove, right after Yi realizes that her violin, her most tangible connection to her late father, has been destroyed. "The very first time we recorded that, Chloe's father and grandma were visiting," Culton says. "She brought half her family into recording sessions, which I loved, because it allowed us to get to know her better. I was in the booth with her, and I told her, 'This is the point where you realize you're really pulling away from your family and you're telling the story about how much the violin meant to you after it's been broken. We learn that your dad used to play for you every night, and it was a song that made you feel like everything was going to be okay; now, everything's not.'"

At first, the director couldn't understand why Bennet was delivering the line so flat. Was it the dialogue? Was it just an off day? Soon, Culton discovered exactly what Bennet needed to do to shake things up. "Chloe left the booth for a minute and told her family they had to leave. She couldn't do the scene with them there," explains the director. "She came back, and not only did she emote, she was tearing up as she recorded it. Suddenly, I saw her just go there in a way she couldn't with them there; it was too vulnerable. I so appreciate that she was willing to reach that place."

Bennet remembers that day vividly. "My dad and my grandma had come out to see me in L.A., and I brought them into our recording," she says. "I didn't know what scenes we were doing that day, so I got there and realized it was a big scene when Yi's talking about what it's been like to deal with the death of her father. My dad was right in my eyeline. I could see him there with my grandma, and I couldn't do it. It was too much to have them in the room with me, and I needed them to leave. It honestly threw me off. Eventually, we got to the place where it felt like the performance was in the right spot."

Culton then had Bennet return on another day to record the scene again with Tenzing Norgay Trainor, who voices Jin, in the room. The director was just as gobsmacked in this session. "After 20 takes, I told Chloe, 'Just throw away the script. Tell me the story about your dad,'" Culton says. "With tears streaming down her face, she just felt it, fumbled the words and gave this gorgeous performance. The last three

takes where she threw the script away? That's in the film. She was just telling it from her heart and letting it out. She embodied Yi in such an organic way. I was staring at her in amazement about how great she is as an actress. I want to be Chloe's champion for the rest of her career. That girl is going places."

For Bennet, Yi is an important, vital step in expanding the representation of Asian people, and Asian girls in particular, in popular culture. "Maybe this character came to me as a nice gift for not having her as a 10-year-old," Bennet says. "It did just as much for me as a 25- to 27-year-old in the process of making it. The power of representation is everything. You don't realize that when you don't see someone who looks like you on TV, on film or in music, you start to idolize the people who don't look like you. It becomes this big snowball effect. 'Those people are successful, and they have blond hair. If they don't have eyes that look like mine, maybe I'm not good enough because I don't look like them.' That's the power of having someone who looks like you on screen. I really hope that whether people acknowledge it or realize it, it makes a difference to young girls who feel different or left out—whether they're tomboys or Asians and feel that they're weird. Because they're not. They're really cool. You can be who you are and be a badass at the same time."

Bennet also formed a powerful and lasting bond with Culton, who became equal parts mentor, friend and creative companion. "Jill is incredible and so talented, warm and wonderful," Bennet says. "I couldn't have asked for a better partner. When you're making a film like this, she was everything. She was set, hair and makeup, every character—painting the picture for everyone. It speaks so much to her talent as a writer and director that she was able to put everyone in this carpeted room in a place of creativity and comfortability. She allowed us to transport ourselves to these crazy situations in China. She was able to pull these performances out of everybody. Animation is way more difficult than people think it is. I'd get comments like, 'Oh, you just go in your pajamas into a room and talk?' Nothing is there, so you're relying on that one person. And that one person was Jill. This movie is her heart and my heart. I was so lucky to be able to work alongside her. She's incredible."

Moving from the world of live action with CG to a fully animated production was challenging, to say the least. Bennet laughs: "I thought working on *S.H.I.E.L.D.* with

green screens was difficult, but I've been working on this for three years now, and it's like going back to that version of myself as a kid, making up stories in my mind. You're trying to imagine what the scenes will look like and what your character is doing. The art and craftsmanship of every single shot—and how much work goes into it—blew me away. Everyone I've worked with on this will be friends for life.”

Chou loves hearing those comments and shares that feeling with her star. “Chloe is amazing,” Chou says. “The first time I heard her, I thought Yi was reborn that day. Not only does Chloe feel so passionate about the character from a cultural perspective, but the depth that she brought to Yi has been extraordinary. Yi is a complex role. She's one person on the surface but has so much going on underneath. She has to open herself up and be vulnerable; it's very multidimensional. At times, she has to bring humor to the film as well. Chloe delivered on all of those things.”

Everest

Joseph Izzo

Everest is a massive Yeti who is the age-equivalent of a 9-year-old human boy. When he first appears on Yi's roof, the wounded creature has escaped from Burnish's secret facility—where he was being experimented upon—and is understandably terrified of humans. Although he doesn't speak, he is so expressive and has such a big personality that it is always clear what he's thinking.

Far from his home and family, Everest must rely on Yi and her friends to get him back to the Himalayas. He is curious and playful but can be a beast at times. Like all kids, he plays hard, doesn't know his own strength and his moods are changeable. His relationship with Yi is deep and forms the emotional core of the film. Everest has the power to control nature, as all Yetis do, but he hasn't quite mastered his abilities, often to hilarious effect.

Everest does not speak, but he does have his own distinctive style of communication. To give voice to him, the filmmakers turned to Joseph Izzo. An actor who had worked as a story/editorial production supervisor on the first phase of *Abominable*, Izzo did a number of vocalizations that the crew used as a temp track. But it was not until Culton returned from hiatus that Izzo was officially cast as Everest.

“When Jill came back on the film, we’d been using [internet star] TEDDY THE PORCUPINE, who chats like crazy,” Buirgy says. “She wanted to go back to this idea of Everest having a BIG voice.” (Sidenote: Teddy fans, worry not. Wilderman and Buirgy recorded Teddy in his hometown of Dallas, Texas, and he ultimately voices a surprise character in *Abominable*.)

For Culton, Izzo provided a sound to Everest’s voice that no one else could. “Always in our temp reels, we’d use Joe,” she says. “We had a special jar, a flower vase that’s covered in black gaffer’s tape, and he would hold it up and go to the mic and make noise into it...getting the echoes as well. For all of our temp screenings, he was the voice and gave it resonance. We went through quite a few professional creature artists, but no one could do what Joe did; he made the character come to life.”

One of the first crew on *Abominable*, the actor/production supervisor was at Culton’s side during story edit and art. “I’ve known Jill for years, so every day was an absolute pleasure,” Izzo says. “I can’t speak louder about how generous, calm, articulate and patient she is. If we had a shot I was doing a voice for, we’d watch the scene, she’d talk me through it, and I’d give her a few options. Jill knows when to speak softly and break into moments those times when Everest needed to growl, scream, be touching or silly. We were playful as we went back and forth together to build his voice. She was constantly trying not to ruin a take by laughing in the middle of it...but you knew you hit the take when she had a smile on her face.”

Although Izzo’s vocalizations were meant to be temporary, Culton and her production team fell in love with the performer as Everest, and eventually couldn’t see anyone else portraying him. “At DreamWorks, if someone needs a scratch voice, there is a small band of us who are available. So, at first, I’d just go to the mic and play around,” Izzo says. “We just had to make the voice sound deeper, bigger and more animal-like. We built a few things for me to project into...to make me sound like I had bigger lungs and a bigger chest cavity. After everything we tried, it all came down to one of the editor’s flower vases. It had the perfect echo to it. We wrapped it in tape, so it wouldn’t have a ting; it echoed from inside the vase and made noises sound bigger.”

As Culton and Izzo perfected Everest’s sound, it became incredibly useful that Izzo was constantly on and nearby set, as opposed to being called in for vocal sessions.

“Because I worked in editorial managing the storyboard artists and editors, I knew the exact sequence,” Izzo says. “It was my job to manage the scene on a production level, so it made it easier to know the characters incredibly well. I was in editorial for hours on end, knew Jill’s notes and what she was looking for. The further we got into production, we used our time more as ADR sessions versus creating his voice. They animated off what I’d done temporarily, so to go in and ADR it made it feel like we were perfecting the action.”

To assist Culton and Izzo, sound designers E², ETHAN VAN DER RYN and ERIK AADAHL, who have created signature sounds for movies from *Godzilla* to *A Quiet Place*, were brought aboard for amplification. “Many films have creatures in them, but very few of the creatures ‘act,’” Culton says. “They don’t have to hold the place of a main character with an emotional arc throughout. In order to emote with people, you need an actor. Joe not only embodied the charm and humor of Everest, but he added that personality that the animators could take and truly make a performance out of—one that made him feel unique.”

So, how did they get that signature Everest sound? “Ethan and Erik would come into our recording sessions with Joe and run his voice through this special box, which took his voice to a lower frequency,” explains Culton. “I could hear him in the cans [earphones], and I’d direct him to go through the sequence. We’d do it just as if I was recording an actor. I’d talk him through where all his emotional content was—what the subtext was. ‘In this moment, you’re telling Yi, “Go play the violin and let this go!”’ but he had to do it in his own creature way. I could hear his affected voice through the cans to make sure we were getting the right dimensions from him. He wasn’t just recording in the booth, he was listening back to his own affected voice...and course correcting from there.”

Izzo has a self-professed goofiness to him, which reminded Culton and Buirgy of the silliness of their pets. That allowed them to make Everest more curious about nature and life. “You ascribe those noises to your pets when you look at them, but Joe can give vocalizations to them,” Culton says. “He became everyone’s pet on steroids. He embodies the best sides of them and how silly and curious they are. We wanted the audience to see the world through this new, innocent way—whether it’s experiencing koi

fish or turtles for the first time or being in nature. This character grew up on Mt. Everest and was captured and put into a facility. This is his first time out in nature and exploring. We wanted everyone to go on that journey with our kids and Everest.”

Over the course of production, Izzo became the owner of a big dog himself and infused Everest with a blend of several creatures, all inspired by his beloved bernedoodle, Marty. “Everest’s sounds are a mix of ape, with a lot of dog and a bit of horse in there,” Izzo says. Still, the voice is always reflective of the artwork. “You need to stick to the design as much as possible,” Izzo says. “Everest has this big mouth, big voice and big teeth...but he reminds me of a friendly gorilla. He started out more beastlike but has softened up over the years. It helped to lighten up his character thinking of little subtleties my own dog has. Everest is smart but can’t vocalize too much. It came down to giving him subtle grunts and reactions.”

To perform opposite Everest, Chloe Bennet pulled from her experiences with her dogs, past and present. “Everest is every dog I’ve ever had,” Bennet says. “I grew up with bullmastiffs. One of our mastiffs had long hair, weighed 215 pounds and her name was Kitty. She was massive. I grew up with six brothers and three massive dogs in Chicago. So, the chaos of having this massive animal and trying to keep it on a roof was so weirdly organic. I also have a French bulldog who is white, and he is so similar to Everest in his mannerisms.

“Everest is just so cute,” Bennet continues. “It was so fun to see his evolution, the noises he makes and the combination of how the filmmakers got to that place of creating this lovable icon. If you love animals, the power of having a stressful day and coming home to an animal that you love is so real. Anyone who cares about animals can relate to Everest. He’s very real to me.”

Jin

Tenzing Norgay Trainor

Jin is a popular and self-involved 18-year-old. He and Yi have grown up together, yet they have developed different tastes and are no longer close. But when Yi needs his help getting Everest home, Jin rises to the occasion and is willing to endure even the loss of Wi-Fi to help his friend. He’s not just the opposite of Yi. He’s the one who’s

primped out and would never leave the city. She's the one who is looking over the wall. The more Jin's afraid to get dirty, the more Yi is rough and tumble.

When they were kids, Jin watched out for Yi because she would get into trouble. He ends up going on this journey because Everest grabs Yi from the rooftop—where she's been taking care of him—when Burnish's mercenaries come after them and the Yeti takes her on his back across the city. Along with Peng, Jin chases after her until they end up on a dock. She puts Everest on a rickety barge, where he is clearly not going to be okay. Yi makes that leap of faith to jump onto the vessel with him, and of course Peng follows; Jin makes the choice to jump into action. Their lives will never be the same.

"Jin is connected to his friends, but what he's looking for is something deeper—this way to be connected to his more authentic self," Buirgy says. "He finds his way to that as he makes his journey with, and gets separated from, Yi and Peng. He gets on board with the idea that Everest is important, and they need to get him back home. Still it is NOT Jin's job to save Yi. That was never the idea with this story, and that's not going to happen. You feel a little [romantic] twinkle [between them], but Yi's not there yet. It's a friendship. He respects her, and she learns to respect him."

Culton agrees that they have always thought of Yi and Jin as growing up together. "You learn that throughout the story, but we add later in the film that they were best friends when they were little kids and Jin always looked after Yi like she was his little sister," the director says. "When you have characters that are that close but drift apart, they still always know each other. It's like kids I grew up with on my block. Even though we had different personalities and fell into different social groups...if anything should happen to me, or if I was upset, you crossed the lines. The barriers of social groups can be crossed if something extraordinary happens, whether it's a tragedy or a joy."

Brought aboard to play Jin was breakout TV performer Tenzing Norgay Trainor, who has made a name for himself in the past several years on the Disney Channel. The actor liked to offer multiple versions of his lines and was willing to try just about anything for the sake of the film. "Tenzing was so funny when he would go to these great extremes," Culton says. "He would make Jin throw a fit, and his voice would go to this

squeaky place. His character is so specific to these guys who really care about what they look like and seem so suave on the outside but can come unravelled about the dumbest things like their shoes getting dirty. He would just go there on his tirades that were so funny and not flattering, like yelling, ‘Do you know how much I paid for these shoes!?’” Yet, Jin is the most responsible character in the film. He looks out for everyone, and you love him for that. Tenzing brought comedy but also a soulfulness to this character, who truly transforms over the film.”

For Trainor, the most interesting aspect of the years-long production was getting the opportunity with Culton’s crew to riff. “Jill, Todd and I would constantly bounce ideas off each other, like, ‘What if Jin said this?’ Trainor says. “Sometimes we would, with the animators in the room, ask, ‘What if he did this, as well as saying this?’ They’d have cameras on me to mimic my actions. We constantly thought of different ways to do things.”

As so much of vocal performance in animation is a solitary exercise, Trainor welcomed the rare opportunity to act alongside his fellow *Abominable* performers, especially when it came to the infamous “maybe it’s you” scene. “Chloe and I were able to record twice, once with no cameras,” Trainor says. “That was the best experience I’ve had. She’s such a great actor and being able to go into the booth together and talk face-to-face during the making of an animated movie was so cool. We were able to say our lines differently because we could see each other’s faces, as well as how we were reacting to the dialogue. In the booth, it was Jill, Chloe and me. It was a creative space where we could all just talk to each other. I feel like the words had more meaning behind them. The scene we did together was one of the most emotional in the movie.”

Culton loved that her young cast welcomed opportunities to challenge themselves. Even though she wrote the script, she was open to letting the actors try what felt most natural to them. “I feel like after so many recording sessions, the actors become the characters,” Culton says. “If I heard them tripping up during a read, I’d ask them, ‘What do you think you would say here?’ We’d workshop the script pages, and it was exciting to watch it unfold. Someone might accidentally say something so much better. In live action, you don’t always have the opportunity to do that.”

Just as it took some time to perfect Yi's arc, Culton and her fellow filmmakers evolved Jin's interplay in the saga. "My character went from being the whiny, complain-y kid to the more mature one," Trainor says. "They went back and split the difference and, by the end of the film, alongside Yi, he's taken the grown-up role." The performer appreciates that his character evolves as much as any other in *Abominable*. "One of the biggest themes of the movie is being open to change," Trainor says. "Yi's character opens her heart and learns to embrace her family. Jin does as well. He starts as this conceited kid who is trying to be popular and not including the family. His revelation is that the problem has been with him himself the whole time."

Peng

Albert Tsai

Peng is a fun-loving, basketball-playing 9-year-old who is constantly trying to get Yi or his cousin Jin to play with him. Voiced by 15-year-old Albert Tsai, best known for his roles on the ABC series *Trophy Wife* and *Dr. Ken*—and who got his start at the age of 8 on CBS' hit series *How I Met Your Mother*—Peng finds a kindred spirit in Everest. He is instantly enthusiastic about the adventure to help return his new Yeti back home. The antics of Peng and Everest are the source of much hilarity on their journey to the Himalayas. Tsai was the first member of the production to be cast and has been recording with *Abominable* since he was 12.

For Buirgy, the scenes between Peng and Everest are among her most cherished in the film. "I adore the sequence between the two of them when they're playing in the background and you realize that Everest is just a kid," the producer says. "That whole scene with that crazy humor is so relatable, yet you're in an all-new place in their world. That's a gentle way of saying, 'We are all connected; we can find common ground if we look for it.'"

Joseph Izzo appreciated the familial interaction Culton fostered between Peng and Everest, and he brought that into his character work. "I grew up in a big family," Izzo says. "I have younger siblings and nine nieces and nephews. In those moments with Peng, I couldn't help but think that's what I'd do with them. I'd play monster with them. Even though the other actors weren't in the room, it felt like such a playful moment."

The Peng-Everest scenes are some of Chloe Bennet's favorites, too. "From a comedic standpoint, anything with Peng and Everest is so funny and exciting for me," the actor says. "I have a little brother who was so similar to Peng when we were growing up. Getting to watch a Chinese family, in a story that takes place in China, being completely normalized is what I've been craving to see on screen since I was a kid."

While Yi leaps before she looks, and Jin is the too-cautious skeptic, Peng is pure joy. "We've always looked at Peng as the true kid in the moment who's enjoying everything," Culton says. "He doesn't think that anything is going to happen to them. If he's crying one moment, he is laughing the next. He's all emotion and wearing his heart on his sleeve. Because he's a kid, Yi and Jin take the role of parents. They have to watch out for him because he will get himself into trouble. This journey has forced them to take on adult roles.

"We wanted Peng to also be a kid, so we could show how his playing with Everest made it obvious to Yi that Everest was a kid himself," Culton continues. "The way they bond, the way they play and do thumb wars together—this rough-and-tumble bond Peng has with Everest—makes Yi realize Everest has parents waiting on him that he must get back to. That tugs deeply at her heartstrings and makes her more determined to get him home; it also comes from her deep-seated longing to have her own family back together again. That means not just her own mom and grandma, but with the greater family of Jin and Peng as part of that."

Culton found Tsai and his family to be eager collaborators, and she was constantly amused by how the young performer served as a de facto script supervisor and junior rigger on *Abominable*. "Albert has these high-powered parents willing to give up everything to fly down here from San Jose for recording sessions," she says. "He must have this photographic memory. Every time I would change one word of the script—whether his lines or anyone else's—he'd say something like, 'Didn't this used to say...?' 'Is this the scene that's between the canola fields and the bamboo grove? You guys took a scene out of here, right?'"

The filmmaker loved that her young star was as invested in the production as anyone on set. "Albert had done an animation camp once, and he would come upstairs

to talk to his character's lead animator and would know all the technical terms," Culton recalls. "He'd ask questions like, 'Did you put the rigging here?'"

Tsai responded to the character and instantly saw that he and Peng have several similar personality traits—both confident, happy, fun-loving and energetic. As well, Tsai drew much inspiration for Peng from his younger cousin, with whom he is quite close. It was poignant for the Taiwanese-American performer to be involved in a project with such familial ties, as well as to help showcase the beauty of China.

For the actor, it became a bit of a game to discover if Culton had altered even one word of a scene when he'd come back to re-record. "I love reading scripts, and I like to pick up on changes in sequences, or if they'd swap something," Tsai says. "One of my favorite parts of filming was watching the different clips that Jill and Todd would show before each recording session. Even the visuals of the same scene would change so much that it'd become a whole new scene to me."

Tsai admits that he feels a great deal of affection not only toward the process, but for his *Abominable* family. "Every time we went back to record, Jill and Todd would have animated more scenes, and they would show me clips my character was in," Tsai says. "It was interesting to see *Abominable* go from basic sketches to 3D animation and finally in a movie theater, with the lighting, music and all details completed. It was so emotional. One of my favorite moments was getting to meet the cast at the EPK shoot, because I'd always recorded alone with Jill and Todd. Chloe, Tenzing and I finally got to record side by side."

When asked if he's been bitten by the animation bug and has any interest in laboring on the other side of the camera, Tsai says: "I'd love to go behind the scenes and work in animation one day. It's such a different process than live action and TV—where we film with the cast all at once. The creative process is so amazing. I saw how Jill, Todd and Suzanne went through and turned the script for *Abominable* into a full movie."

Throughout the process, Tsai embraced his role. "Albert was always willing to be in the moment and make things up," says his director. "He is that kid who's in the moment, and I appreciate his brightness. He also has the funniest giggle in the world."

He was so happy to just be there and embody the character, as well as to know more about the movie and to be a part of the crew. He's a delight."

Nai Nai

Tsai Chin

Nai Nai is Yi's opinionated grandmother whose words of wisdom don't always make immediate sense. She is a traditionalist, baffled by Yi's habit of running from place to place. Nai Nai suspects that Yi is not dealing well with the death of her father and spends her days trying to keep her little family intact.

Brought to life by legendary actress Ms. Tsai Chin—whose career has spanned early days as an ingenue in the *James Bond* series and as the toast of the West End in the '60s, to latter scene-stealing work in *The Joy Luck Club* and a celebrated role in this year's *Lucky Grandma*—Nai Nai is Yi's paternal grandmother, who serves as a poignant reminder that it's not only Yi who's grieving. In one scene where Yi's mom is telling Nai Nai how much Yi misses her dad, Nai Nai replies, "We all do."

For Chou, working with the actress was one of the pinnacles of her career. "Tsai Chin is an icon and seeing *The Joy Luck Club* was one of those seminal moments in my life," Chou says. "That film was the first time that I felt like anything on screen that related to me and my family was in mainstream media. I was in my early 20s working at Touchstone Pictures right before it came out, and I saw it in a screening room. By the end, I was the only person left in this giant room by myself. Everyone else had left. There were tears streaming down my face; it was this surreal moment. I remember at that time with anyone I dated—who I thought it could be serious—I'd tell them, 'You have to watch *The Joy Luck Club* with me. I have to know your reaction.' That was the litmus test for a viable relationship."

The fabulous octogenarian, who was a young girl in Shanghai during World War II, reflects on her storied career—noting that she owes much of who she is as a performer to the three countries she has called home. "I always think that China gave me my roots, England nurtured me and America rewarded me," Ms. Chin says. As a teacher of aspiring actors, she offers advice she's given to her students for decades. "Acting is like a pyramid. Talent is at the bottom, but it has a lot to do with luck," Ms.

Chin says. “The rest is training and hard work. If you have talent but don’t work hard, train hard and have some luck, it doesn’t matter.”

The first Asian student ever admitted into the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art—as well as the first Asian woman to headline a sold-out show in the West End and on Broadway—the titular star of *The World of Suzie Wong* discusses where she’s been, as well as what drives her and informs her performances. “When you get to a certain age, you’re playing the mother, then the grandmother. Eventually, I’ll play great-grandmother,” Ms. Chin says. “Still, I’ve never played anyone as a victim. That’s what I tell a lot of young actors. ‘Stop whining. Fight, but don’t whine. It gets very boring!’ My mother was a strong woman, and I’m not a shrinking violet. Even when I was small, I fought with boys. I didn’t always win, but I’d get up and fight again. It’s not in me to play somebody weak. I always try and infuse some punch into my character.”

Ms. Chin credits her beloved parents for the sense of confidence she’s brought to characters including Yi’s Nai Nai, a trait she infused in the vocal work for *Abominable* and echoes the strong heroine Culton created. “My father was very progressive for a classical actor, and from a small age, my mother told me that it’s not about marrying a rich person. It’s about being strong and educated,” Ms. Chin says. “Very early on, I’ve learned the power of saying ‘no.’ I’ve been acting for 62 years and have done everything, including having a huge record. After a while, you go beyond the technique. You’re free, but you have all the technique inside you.” When queried to describe her experience with the DreamWorks Animation and Pearl Studio team over the past couple of years, Ms. Chin says, “I just love the people there. The great thing about animation is that you’re very close to the director. I told Jill, ‘It takes a woman to put me in the back of the kitchen!’”

Chin’s emotional depth and more than six decades of experience as a performer imbued her scenes with grace and gravitas. “Grandma is the one holding the family together,” Culton says. “At the end of the film, when Yi comes back, Nai Nai says, ‘It’s good to have you back, granddaughter.’ That statement has a double meaning. It means, ‘I’m glad you’re back from Beijing’ and it also means, ‘I’m glad we can now have you back, connected with the family.’” After Culton explained the double entendre to Ms. Chin during her recording session, something changed. “She stopped for a minute,

looked at me, then went somewhere in her head,” Culton says. “When she came back, from wherever that was, and said that line, it brought tears to all our eyes. She dug into a place within herself where it resonated within herself and her own family. She’s the heart of the film. I couldn’t love Tsai more; she’s a treasure.”

Now that she’s traversed roles from stage to screen, as well as student to professor, Ms. Chin notes that this unexpected, new period in her career offers rewards in a different way. Indeed, that freedom allowed her to bring to Nai Nai the spirit of one tough, lovable grandma. “The great thing about voice is that you don’t do it every day. Also, they pay much better than being in a play,” Ms. Chin says, dryly. “That’s the irony of it all: The harder you work, the less you get! I love the crew of *Abominable*, and what’s wonderful is that you can make all sorts of noises you normally don’t make in polite society, as well as make people laugh.”

Yi’s Mom

Michelle Wong

Yi’s Mom is sad and worried about her daughter. She is still suffering from the loss of her husband, but her most immediate concern is helping her child. Her strength and belief will come to be great sources of comfort for Yi.

Carnegie Mellon-trained thespian Michelle Wong, known for her role in *Dear White People* and a wide array of vocal work, brings her talents to the role of the woman struggling to hold her family together after her partner’s death. While Nai Nai can’t understand why Yi is so distant, Mom knows that her daughter needs time to process the grief. “Michelle was perfect for Mom,” says Buirgy. “We were all kind of knocked out when we found out how young she was because her voice has such warmth to it.”

We meet Yi’s Mom at the beginning of Yi’s journey and through her character we see the family is struggling to move on after a devastating blow. As the film’s star has such unique intonations, it took some time to find the ideal actress to bring life to Yi’s mother. “Chloe has a rich, deep voice, and they needed someone with a deep voice to match hers,” Wong says. “It was nice to live in my natural tone. As a woman, I find myself often having to lighten my voice and make it a bit brighter, but as Yi’s Mom, I

really got to sit in the depth, roundness and warmth of it...since that's what Jill and her team were drawn to."

From the first time she saw Culton's visuals for the animation, the San Diego, California, native was impressed by the attention to detail and respect paid to Asian heritage. "I was blown away by how gorgeous everything was and so excited to see how much Chinese culture was incorporated into *Abominable*," Wong says. "It was so cool to see a Chinese family portrayed on screen as a real family...not a caricature of one. This is a family that is similar to the one I grew up in. When I was auditioning for the role of Yi's Mom, I thought a lot about how my own mom talks to me when I'm in a tough place. There's a fine line between stern and loving." The actress echoes her co-stars when reflecting upon the connectedness of this tale. "I hope that people recognize the relatability of the problems this family is dealing with and the journey they're taking," Wong says. "The relationships are so honest, and I'm so grateful that we can tell a story that takes place with Asian characters but is about the universality of humans."

All people feel distant from their family and friends at some point in their lives, and the role of Yi's mother represents that safe space that Yi, and by extension every child, needs. "Whether it's a kid that's bullied in school and won't talk to their parents about it, or whether it's a divorce, we all long to connect with our family," Culton says. "But along the way, circumstances happen where that's not possible. When we're distanced from our families, that tugs at everybody's heartstrings. You want to feel bonded to the people who are part of your central unit."

It is Yi's Mom's steady guiding hand and unconditional love that will ultimately give Yi the courage she needs. "Yi's going on this journey to reconnect back to her family," Culton says. "She needs to realize that her Mom and Nai Nai are still there. Plus, her extended family of Jin and Peng is even bigger and more supportive than she thought it could be. We didn't want to shy away from the hard feelings of going through grief, but we also didn't want that to lead the story."

Reflecting upon the moment that Yi's Mom closes the door to her daughter's room and sighs, Wong agrees that so much of *Abominable* is in the moments that aren't said—looks, sighs and double meanings all exist between the dialogue. "In a family dynamic where you don't talk about emotions very much, that inhale-and-exhale

expression is everything,” Wong says. “I remember how much Jill and I worked on conveying looking at a child and wanting them to be safe...and wishing that you knew how to make it all better. Sometimes there aren’t words to express what you’re feeling.”

Burnish

Eddie Izzard

When Burnish was a kid, he claimed he saw a Yeti, and the world laughed at him in disbelief. Since then, he has built incredible wealth and destroyed as much natural beauty as possible. Now, as an old man, he still dreams of proving to the world that Yetis exist. In Burnish’s mind, capturing Everest would be the ultimate revenge.

For the production, it took a while to figure out the dynamic between Burnish and Everest. “It’s really tough to have villains that you care about,” says Buirgy, “but you need some reason for why they’re doing what they’re doing. In the end, here’s this guy who wants to prove to himself that he saw a Yeti.” Driven by that obsession, he’s disconnected from the world.

But as Burnish pursues Everest, he’s thrust into nature and is forced to reinsert himself into life; that changes him. “The idea that there are precious things we must take care of is important to the story,” Buirgy says. “The message is ‘interact with them but put them back.’ When Burnish reconnects with life, he is given a choice to make.”

Brought on board to play Burnish was British actor Eddie Izzard, who is equal parts actor and comedian. “Eddie has done some animation before, but I was lucky that a good friend of mine had worked with him before,” says Culton. “He told me Eddie loves to play with the role; you can’t hold him to the pages. He’s not only an incredible performer, he’s an amazing person.”

Her colleague wasn’t kidding. Culton was stunned to find out that Izzard had, only a few years prior, run 27 marathons in 27 days. “Eddie has stamina and willpower like no one I have ever seen,” she says. “The strength of will and mind is key to who he is as a person; he’s intense. I told him ‘We want you to play with this character and make him your own. If that means going off script, as long as we get the main content we need, I’m totally good with that.’”

Together, they dove into the character, and Izzard mined the depth of the Yeti-obsessed Burnish, finding layers and complexity within what could have been a stock villain. “We want you to see two sides of the same coin with all the characters,” Culton says. “At the end of the first day of recording, Eddie said, ‘I really love this character!’”

The filmmaker found working with Izzard to be a delightful roller coaster. “Anytime you record Eddie, he’ll start with the script, then go off on tangents...in a stunning way,” Culton says. “When we got his recordings back, I had every word he gave us transcribed. It was countless pages of beautiful tangents that would weave in and out of the plot, ones we folded into the character. With someone like him, you’re getting unexpected humor—twists that give the character a nuance I didn’t write. That’s the beautiful thing with filmmakers and actors. You’re creating one thing, but the performers give it such dimension. He did that in spades here.”

While Izzard has done a number of comedic roles for animation and live action, he appreciated the opportunity to bring a more serious side to the grizzled Burnish—empathizing with the antagonist’s wounded qualities. “You have to find the humanity to him to crack the arc of this guy who is a bit pompous and bombastic,” Izzard says. “I’ve trained myself to do both comedic, off-the-wall, as well as more dramatic. In life I’ve found that there are qualities one can have like, say, determination that—depending on whether you have a positive heart or a negative heart—will express themselves differently. Burnish is a determined little bastard of small stature who has no sense of humor, whereas I do have a sense of humor. He’s fearful and suspicious, while I try to be brave and curious.”

When he was a boy, Burnish believed that he narrowly escaped an attack on Mt. Everest by a Yeti, and he’s spent his life trying to convince anyone who will listen how *he* is the wounded party, as well as that these creatures are vicious and must be destroyed. Izzard was keen to explore how early fear deeply shapes personality traits. Much like his director, the performer mined pathos within comedy. “You have to think about how scared Burnish felt up on that mountain and how he reacted with anger,” Izzard says. “That taps into the life of human beings as we’ve known in our time and down through the centuries. If you’re scared, some people attack, instead of asking yourself if you should be brave and curious.”

Echoing producer Buirgy's comments regarding respecting the order of the natural world, Izzard extends his thoughts to the power of connectivity *Abominable* explores. "The film shows quite a childlike quality of the character of Everest," Izzard says. "If you track almost all mammals in the world, they all have this childlike beginning. But when they become adult, we can become afraid of them. This creature looks very alien, but in the end, there's this connectivity between Everest and humans. Maybe we see ourselves reflected in a scared creature that is lost. How would you feel if you were lost and didn't know how to find your way home?"

The performer and activist pauses, offering that just as Burnish misjudges Everest, so often do humans initially stereotype one another. "Shyness and aloofness can look like the same thing," Izzard says. "Many people have been attacked when they were seen to be standoffish, but they were just shy. Hopefully, audiences can look at this and see a story of someone who is quite like humans in the end...someone just trying to get back home."

Dr. Zara

Sarah Paulson

Dr. Zara is much more than she appears to be. On the surface, she is a British zoologist who loves animals and works to ensure their safety and well-being. Although she is helping Burnish find Everest, she swears that her goal is to protect Everest from Burnish's darker impulses. As the story unfolds, though, we wonder if the brilliant scientist is as wholly altruistic as she claims to be.

Bringing the character to life is multihyphenate Sarah Paulson, a Golden Globe Award-winning performer who became a huge contributor on set. "I've always loved Sarah as an actress, and from the outside she appears so casual, so happy-go-lucky... but she is a perfectionist with her craft," says Culton. "When we pitched her the idea that she'd have a British accent, she had two things that were important to her: 1) not being too cartoony, which I appreciate because we always try to make our characters steeped in reality, and 2) she also didn't want to have an accent everyone could tell was fake. Sarah asked for a dialect coach [JESSICA DRAKE, *Forrest Gump*, AMC's *The Walking Dead*], and she really studied. The dialect coach was in the room or on the

monitor with me in the booth. Sarah would go through her lines, and we'd either get the thumbs up or down from the coach. She was course correcting throughout her performances."

Over the course of production, Paulson was never precious and was willing to take any direction, no matter how small. Culton laughs: "Jessica would say, 'It's like you have a ping-pong ball in your mouth...'. Sarah had to keep track of not just performance, but also this person correcting her dialect. To navigate a good performance through that is incredible. Her accent turned out fantastic, but even more than that, she allows the character to go from uptight and proper to totally undone. Her entire body posture changed with that transition, and we then worked with the animators to reflect that, to make every nuance appropriate."

For the actor, bringing life to Dr. Zara equalled a lifelong coming to terms of her own. Despite the success Paulson has found on screen, the actor assumed she'd never be able to work in animation. Turns out that what she supposed was a deterrent was just what Culton saw as the embodiment of the tale's zoologist. "Early in my career, I lost a job with a lot of voiceover because I have a sibilant 's' when I speak," Paulson says. "I was told that because of my slight speech impediment, it would be hard for me to get employed with a project with heavy voiceover work. I had a misconception about this world, and I was anxious and unsure." Fortunately, what was a lifelong knack for off-the-cuff vocals ended up landing her the work. "I got on the phone with Jill, who had seen me on *Jimmy Fallon* doing certain impressions," Paulson says. "She felt the film would be a natural fit, and I told her I was apoplectic about doing it, but she talked me into the film. It was empowering, and I credit the team for making me feel comfortable, and that I was the only one they wanted to voice Zara."

As brave and curious as Eddie Izzard asks us all to be, Paulson found her foray into voiceover brought challenges to her craft she never expected. "With this kind of work, bigger is better, which is the opposite of most work as an actor," Paulson says. "Traditionally, naturalism is king, or queen, something I adhere to. This role pushed the limits of my comfort zone, to go bigger, bigger, bigger. But when we played back recordings with the rough animation, I could tell that it needed more. After going in to

record blindly, then seeing it matched with animation, I realized I could go bigger and that this part *needed* to go bigger.”

As she went through the years-long process of animation, the performer appreciated the level to which her director allowed her to tinker with the role. “Jill and I kept talking about how I could modulate the believability of the character. It was important to both of us that Dr. Zara not be a wallflower or overly meek at the top. She didn’t want to put that out in the world. The idea of Zara being a very capable scientist and a strong woman was very important, and it was to Jill whom I looked for guidance with the character. I relied solely on that. She’s a wonderful person.”

Paulson found that bringing life to her zoologist was both affirming and utterly terrifying. “Everyone I know who’s done voiceover work says it’s the greatest job in the world,” Paulson says. “I’m such a perfectionist who’s been told I didn’t have a voice for this world that I was nervous to give them what they wanted. It was a big release for me that by the end of the process I did have fun. The team made me feel valued.”

Likewise, she appreciates that *Abominable* is for all audiences, and that its core message is one of empowerment. “I’m grateful to be a part of a movie that I’m so proud to send my two nieces off to, and they’ll see that their Aunt Sarah was a part of this entire universe,” Paulson says. “It’s a powerful thing to say to them, ‘This is a movie written and directed by a woman, produced by women and starring women. Look what you can do. Being a woman is an asset, not a hindrance. Go out and shake things up.’”

The actor shares that moviegoers demand the life they experience be reflected and elevated. “For audiences and the world at large, when you’re telling stories, you want to see what your world looks like represented on screen,” Paulson says. “Given that there are so many women walking the planet, you want to feel that represented in the manner that this story is given to you—through the lens, the gaze or the eye of the female perspective. Having that all around you while you’re working on a story about this young girl and her journey is moving and beautiful. Any time you feel yourself represented, it makes you feel less alone on the planet. The more you feel connected to those around you, there’s a general sense of goodwill. In order for that to happen, you have to have your world reflected back to you in the art that we digest. I’m glad to be part of something that represents a real shift into more of this work happening.”

Jerboas and Whooping Snakes

***Abominable's* Animal Oddities**

Much like Yi and Everest, the supporting creatures in this film have evolved over the years. Originally, Yi had a mouse named Ling-Ling, but the character eventually became, instead, a jerboa (desert-dwelling rodent) named Duchess. And, perhaps the production's favorite surprise were the whooping snakes, genetically engineered creatures that originated from a very unexpected place. "It was late night during a brainstorm when we came up with this idea that made us giggle," Buirgy says. "The whooping snakes became the 'whack-a-mole' of the movie. Kids just dug the unexpected 'Whoop. Whoop!' They're just so funny."

CHARACTER DESIGN AND EVOLUTION

When it comes to character creation and design, Culton takes her craft with the utmost seriousness. This work ethic and passion goes back to her first feature, *Toy Story*, when she was in her early 20s. "A bunch of us from CalArts moved up to Northern California," Culton says. "This was the first computer-animated film, and Pixar wanted 12 animators to start on the same day; I was one of those. We had to learn UNIX, and every day, we'd come in and software would be either broken or enhanced. It was so hard every day, and none of us knew at the time that CG was the way that the world was going."

The filmmaker's passion for inventive storytelling extended to the creation of one of that studio's most beloved characters, Jessie, from *Toy Story 2*. All her hard work proved worth it, not just on a creative level, but a humanitarian one. "I'll never forget that after the film came out, letters started coming to the studio and they were posted on the wall," she continues. "They were, 'My kid fought cancer because he thought he was Buzz Lightyear and could go to infinity and beyond.' I realized the power of movies then. We give our lives to these things, and I knew I didn't want to ever be on a movie that was just sheer entertainment. They have to mean something."

This discipline and affection for the art of animation was not lost on the film's actors. "I've learned that great animators are extraordinary observers of behavior," says Sarah Paulson. "A gesture, a look or a walk can be elevated and transformed into

something shockingly human. I asked one of the animators if he stares at people all the time—not just the ones he’s animating, but people in general to get a sense of movement and how tiny gestures communicate a story. Animators must be wonderful observers, which is not that different than great acting, when it’s brought to you by people who observe human behavior and reflect that back. When it’s effective, we are moved by a nuance we see as something a family member, friend or we ourselves might do.”

Yi

Over the course of production, Yi evolved from a younger kid to an older one. Although much of her character’s core design has remained the same, for the filmmakers it’s been like watching a little girl grow up into a young woman of 16. One of the reasons was that, in order for Yi to do odd jobs and earn money by herself in a large city in China, she needed to be this age.

Early on, the team sent the designs to Pearl Studio for feedback and to get Yi feeling like an authentic, independent teenager in modern-day China. “For me, *Abominable* is next level in that it’s obviously a Chinese girl in a story set in China, but it’s also not about that,” Chou says. “It’s an amazing adventure, and this wonderful story about this girl and a Yeti. Yi happens to be Chinese, and they happen to be traveling through the country. It’s just great, organic storytelling.”

Making Yi both specific and universal was key. “These characters are very authentic to their country and nationality, but they are also archetypal—so relatable to every kid,” Culton says. “That’s a fine line to walk when you’re designing characters. We wanted both. Even with Yi’s haircut, we had storyboard artists who interned from China, and we asked them to come up with cool hair designs for her. They came up with her current bob, which was so unexpected.”

It was important for Culton to have her heroine’s clothes be fun and playful and not something typically girly; still, the accessories were the toughest to tackle. “In order to take Yi’s violin on the journey, her backpack became a big thing,” Culton says. “It’s a challenge in CG to have something like that be on your lead character the entire time—taking it on and off and pulling the violin out of the pack.” Turns out that creative

necessity is the mother of invention. “We asked ourselves: ‘What if you could put her backpack on your head and it would turn into the face of Everest?’ Peng puts it on his head so they can play ‘monster’ together. It has button eyes and a nose, as well as a face mask that replicates Everest.”

Everest

With his thick, ruffle-able white fur, Everest himself was, without a doubt, the single hardest character to bring to life on the production. “The normal thing would be to have this Yeti talk, possibly sing and be anthropomorphic so we could relate to him in that way,” Culton says. “I wanted none of that. We wanted Everest to be on four legs, and then two whenever needed.”

The idea that the mystical, magical creature could roll up into a ball whenever he wanted was an idea of Everest character designer NICOLAS “NICO” MARLET, who designed on *How to Train Your Dragon* and *Kung Fu Panda* and was also lead designer on *Yi*. Marlet drew creativity from his pack of adorable pups. “Nico has been a good friend of mine for decades,” says Culton. “He has three fluffy little dogs, Shih Tzus and Malteses. I swear that the inspiration for Everest was his fascination with them. Nico just made them gigantic.

“You can see them in the hair that comes down over Everest’s face,” continues Culton. “He evolved from a character that was a little more edgy and monster-ish to more charming and cute. That evolved with the story as we realized Everest is a kid. He became a little bit more approachable.”

Culton’s actors appreciated the painstaking attention, and that our Yeti is dualistic in every frame of the film. “Everest is really just a big fur ball, and I know audiences are going to find him so cute,” says Albert Tsai. “At first, you find him a little scary, but he’s really a best friend to everyone, especially Peng.”

By far the most challenging aspect of Everest’s design, over the seven years of the film’s development, was the look of his white fur against white snow. Still, this painstaking attention to detail was worth every moment of the production. Buirgy says, “All of the things that came together to make Everest look as good as he does—from Nico’s initial character designs to our modelers, led by our head of modeling, JEFF

HAYES, to our riggers, to John Hill, our head of character animation, and to the amazing animation supervisors we have—all of those things made Everest work so beautifully.”

Because Everest is a non-speaking character, there needed to be so much nuance through his performance. “We had to make sure everyone understood the potential of his character and keep him alive, even though he doesn’t have a lot of dialogue,” says Wilderman. “It’s more, ‘How’s he reacting to this line, or is he curious about something else while they’re talking about over there?’ We’d talk through a lot of this with the story artists and explore that to keep the sequences. This ensured that something wasn’t just a set piece, it allowed for a bonding experience.”

Even though growling vocalizations could be hard on Joseph Izzo’s throat, just reflecting on the beloved beast makes the performer smile. “You look at the posters and design and just want to hug him,” Izzo says.

For most of the film Everest is the only Yeti we see, until a thrilling moment near the end of *Abominable* where we glimpse Everest’s parents shrouded in the Himalayas. “Yetis never show themselves,” Culton shares. “They’re really good at covering their tracks and disappearing into the snow...that’s why people don’t know they exist.

“These Yetis, for one moment, are willing to show themselves to these kids who brought their child back home. It’s almost the gift in return that they’re willing to be vulnerable and show themselves...just for a moment, just for these kids,” Culton continues. “They step back and disappear, just as if Yetis never existed. It’s that special glimpse that you give the audience along with these kids. We feel like we’ve brought Everest home. We get to keep the secret, and we’re bringing the audience in on the secret.”

GROUNDBREAKING VISUAL EFFECTS

Abominable VFX supervisor Mark Edwards has been with DreamWorks Animation for more than 22 years, spending the majority of his first two decades at the studio working in lighting and effects. Elevated to his current role during production of 2016’s *Kung Fu Panda 3*, Edwards partnered with the majority of Jill Culton’s production departments to help realize his director’s creative vision for this film.

From modeling, surfacing and character effects to the decisions about how to build out landscapes—not to mention simulations such as the evolution of Everest and Yi's magic, as well as final lighting and destruction scenes such as the Himalayan avalanche—his department's contributions permeate the animation. Sharing his experience during production, Edwards says, "It was the most challenging film I've been on, but the crew was so capable. It was so fun to give them creative guidance and to let them go and do their best work."

Echoing his fellow crew and the film's cast, the VFX supervisor found his experience with Culton and co-director Todd Wilderman to be quite the educational one. "Jill and Todd involved our department early on with story brainstorming and allowed us to be a part of evolving character arcs—including effects and location designs for where Yi and her friends travel with Everest," Edwards says. "We would discuss each story scene, their thoughts about the location and how the magic would work for that sequence, as well as how we would build up Everest's magic over the course of the film. They were open to taking the best of new ideas from all the crew."

Edwards also worked closely with production designer Max Boas, with whom his crew would share art-design ideas and puzzle through how they would build pieces in layout, as well as elicit the ideal elements from the lighting and surfacing divisions. Ultimately, they would review the final lighting and provide wrap notes at that end stage.

To take this intricate work from the theoretical to the practical, let us walk through a scene that demonstrates how the VFX department dovetailed with the rest of *Abominable's* production.

Within the Leshan Buddha sequence, during which Yi has a breakthrough about love and loss, Edwards' goal was to create an artistically elevated, yet realistic, portrayal of this actual location just east of Leshan City, Sichuan Province. This scene showcases how Everest guides Yi to play for her father, to let out all the sorrow that she's been holding inside...and celebrate this new chapter she's beginning. For the VFX division, it was crucial that they craft the scene to scale, with head of layout Robert Crawford helping to figure out how they would shoot the characters and magic to make them feel integral to the setting. "We looked at the textures and foliage to make sure we could build those assets to reflect the real world," Edwards says. "We developed how Everest

and Yi's magic would effectively create the field of flowers that blossom and grow as she plays."

Partnering with head of effects Jeff Budsberg's division, Edwards and his team tested how the flowers would bloom as Yi's confidence in her playing builds, the variance they would need and how the magic would affect each element within the scene. "A lot of that is based on the timing of the musical cues, when the flowers would sprout and fill in," Edwards says. "We did a lot of work mocking up the timing to make sure Jill was happy with how that plays out. We also partnered closely with lighting supervisor SONDRA VERLANDER and digimatte supervisor DANNY JANEVSKI to figure out the lighting and matte painting direction. It's a tricky scene, and—as Yi releases her pent-up emotions and finally grieves her father—we wanted it to go from overcast, somber and gloomy to bright and cheerful. This meant working with lighting, surfacing and digimatte to transform everything from the initial blue-gray color palette to a sunny one."

Premo and MoonRay

Producer Suzanne Buirgy acknowledges that none of this would have been possible without proprietary DreamWorks animation technology: "The software we've secured is incredible," Buirgy says. "This combination of Premo, which is an amazing animation software, and MoonRay, a near-real-time rendering one, created wondrous animation renders that look incredible. It's stunning that we are able to have representative lighting in them, which allowed us to look at scenes early on versus waiting for lighting later."

Co-director Todd Wilderman was wowed by just how quickly the software allowed the team to understand what final sequences would look like. "Using Premo, head of character animation John Hill and his team moved so fast with the animation," Wilderman says. "There are a lot of long shots and complex acting in this film. Back in the day, you didn't have full fur when you were animating. You almost had something slick that looked like the Michelin Man. To experience Everest actually having *full* fur that made him look exactly the way he does in the movie...when we were just blocking out animation and approving performance? It was a dream. It allowed us to see the

scene for what it was, make decisions quickly and approve animation much faster—and know it wasn't a leap of faith. What we were seeing was what was going to get rendered and lit. Suddenly, he is in full costume. Same with the kids; they had full-on hair and weren't just geometric shapes.”

Bringing Animated Life to Key Characters

Everest

When it came to delivering the visual effects for all things Everest, the journey for the production crew was equal parts challenge and discovery. “Everest was fun to figure out, as he's both a technical challenge and a creative one,” Edwards says. “He starts out the film as beastlike and needs to be scary at times—as well as a massive, cute, cuddly, furry, fuzzy Yeti. We knew he had to be super-appealing and bond with audiences, but he's also technically difficult to animate...including getting his light fur to feel correct and shade properly.” To perfect this, Edwards' artists worked closely with the film's R&D teams to integrate a new hair-shading model. This ensured that each strand felt correct and that there were the ideal number of light bounces scattering to keep Everest, according to Edwards, “nice and light and fluffy.”

Meringue-y fluffiness intact, the expressivity and wonder of our beloved Yeti proved to be a conundrum of its own. “As Sandy Kao, our rigging supervisor would attest to, there were a lot of rigging challenges in building a face that could essentially open almost in half,” Edwards says. “Everest has a giant mouth, and we had to keep his underbite and protruding teeth while feeling the lips and not losing volume in the face—all while making him cute and appealing. Those were complex problems to solve.”

Because so much of Everest's character animation depends upon the negative space surrounding him, the VFX crew had to use every composition trick in the book to make sure the other characters were reading ideally as clear as possible.

The team collaborated with art director Paul Duncan and labored a great deal on the nuances of white fur against clouds or snow; that allowed the production to have the visual palette to read Everest over myriad white materials in each scene. To accomplish this, Culton's artists employed a great deal of light and shadow treatments, including

gaps in clouds or rocks in snowy areas, to make sure Everest stands out—or blends in—brilliantly.

“Paul used to say that creating Everest was like drawing a polar bear in a snowstorm,” Wilderman says. “His team found elegant ways, especially when we get to the Himalayas, of using shadow. For example, with a shadow side of the mountain that Everest is against—when light is hitting him—they’d use light against dark to pull Everest out when we needed. Then, there were other times when you wanted him to blend in, so he’s hiding in plain sight. We show how the elements are why no one has found a Yeti...and that maybe these creatures are actually out there after all. It’s through this camouflage and magic affecting nature that we have never seen them.”

Even though animating Everest around other characters was tough—regardless of whether they were in a snowy environment or a warmer climate—the Yeti was even more complex to bring to life when he was solo on screen. In a pivotal sequence when Everest is surrounded by flurrying snowfall and whipped wind, the production designer utilized a phenomenal reference of a light, airy, colorful palette that was more pastel in nature. “We used color, as well as value structure, to pop Everest off the screen,” Edwards says. “For example, we’d use orange over purple or pink over blue. Those were trickier than environments where he’s with the kids. In those sequences, he’s the one we had to tone back a bit to make sure the kids come forward as the center of attention.”

Yi

One of the standout characters for the VFX supervisor was the film’s heroine herself. “Yi turned out exceptionally well,” Edwards says, “and what animation has achieved with the subtleties of her expressions is awesome.” As did his fellow department heads, Edwards found perfecting Yi’s movements when playing her stringed instrument to be some of the most laborious. “The violin controls and beautiful playing were some of the most challenging to put in,” Edwards says. “I remember when they brought in a violinist for animation reference to play Yi’s theme, and everyone was emotionally charged by that. One of the supervising animators, Ludo [LUDOVIC

BOUANCHEAU], started taking violin lessons and really embraced the proper playing style to make sure the character was accurate.”

As a sizable amount of *Abominable* has close-up shots, head of character animation John Hill and his animation supervisors were tasked with making the film’s characters especially appealing. “With Yi, we spent weeks and weeks on her hair, silhouettes and finding her character in a graphic way so that we could maintain her overall,” Edwards says. “Even her shirt color and pattern evolved. We wanted to stay true to the Chinese cultural aspects and took that to heart. Red is a symbol of heroes, and eventually we landed on her having a shirt that color, as she’s our hero.”

Edwards echoes director Culton’s comments about the struggles that became Yi’s backpack. While imperative to shelter her beloved violin, adding an omnipresent element that moves, sways and jostles with your lead character could occasionally hamper production. “Early on, Jill did sketches with Yi’s backpack that would allow Peng to wear it on his head and look like Everest,” Edwards says. “We took that sketch and made sure it’d eventually work that way. We went back and designed it around that thought, even though there were so many complexities to it.”

It’s impossible for the visual effects supervisor to discuss Yi without bringing up what he declares is his proudest moment of the years of production. “It has to be when Yi is on the bridge and she finds the resilience to climb up and grab her violin,” Edwards says. We channel all her magic, mingled with Everest’s magic, to bring him back. It’s visually demanding, but I feel like effects, digimatte and lighting made that work so powerfully.”

Yi’s Mom and Nai Nai

With three generations of family in the same home, the visual effects department had its work cut out for it when deciding what moves, expressions and particularities should fit Yi, Yi’s Mom and Nai Nai as they interacted. “Creatively, with Yi’s Mom, we wanted to make sure that she fit in terms of age,” Edwards says. “We did a lot of work with modeling, surfacing and character animation to make her fit that way. For example, you don’t want to add deep crow’s feet but do want to get a bit of age in there to underscore a parental figure.”

When it came to Yi's colorfully wise grandmother, the creative team found that giving Nai Nai a robust figure and tracksuit made her that much more interesting to animate. While they made sure that Nai Nai's desired range of motions and simulations worked with her—and those with whom she lovingly feeds her dumplings—Edwards' crew was pleased to learn that her cloth and skin reacted properly to adjustments. As with all things *Abominable*, cultural sensitivity was paramount. "Everything ran through Peilin Chou and Pearl to make sure we were being culturally accurate," Edwards says. "Nico Marlet initially designed Nai Nai with a bun and grey hair. We got a lot of feedback that that's not necessarily what grandmas in China look like. Many love to keep their hair dyed black. We ended up changing Nai Nai to make sure she felt modern and proper."

Peng and Jin

One character whose animated code was wildly complex to crack was Peng. With spiky hair that betrays its cowlicks the second a lock leaves a brush, Peng spends his journey roughhousing with best friend Everest. Wonderful for the audience, but complex indeed for the visual effects division! "Peng was particularly challenging in terms of his hairstyle," Edwards says. "Nico had done a graphic, almost manga hairdo for him, but translating that into 3D and making sure it moved reasonably took some iterations. We did a lot of work where we'd tone down the reflectivity of the hair and how flashy it would get when Peng's flipping it around—just to make sure we kept the graphic quality. That was a little complex."

Perhaps more than any other character, Jin goes through an arc that finds him, at least in terms of maturity, 180 degrees from where we meet him at the beginning of the journey. "Jin was challenging in his overall transformation," Edwards says. "He starts the film one variant with a slicked-back hairstyle and vest—proper and clean. By the end, he's in a completely different state, which mirrors his overall arc but in a physical way. Tracking his variants and dealing with all the different dirty shoes, losing his vest and adding a new hairstyle...all that was challenging but fun for him."

Dr. Zara and Burnish

Jin and Peng weren't the only principal characters to grapple with haircare in *Abominable*. For brilliant zoologist Dr. Zara, the long trek to the Himalayas showed its wear and tear on her coiffed look as well. "Our big challenge with Dr. Zara was her hair," Edwards says. "She changes her look over the course of the journey, so we needed to develop two distinct styles and merge them together over a reasonable transition." Fortunately for the VFX crew, the character effects team, led by Damon Riesberg, took those seemingly effortless transition shots and made them work beautifully. "It was tricky to have Zara's ponytail move in a realistic way—all the while holding onto the graphic nature that Nico wanted—and making sure that when her hair was down, that it felt and looked natural."

While Zara has all the curls, her employer's strands were limited to the back of his head and his wildly bushy eyebrows. "Burnish was interesting in that he was very stylized, which we all loved from Nico's design, but we had to make sure he could fit in our world as well," Edwards says. "We had to do a lot of massaging to scale to make sure that his head wasn't too big or that he wasn't too short—so he'd fit well with the other characters. He also evolves over *Abominable*. We changed out some of his props, like his pickaxe—what it meant, where it came from and how he uses it. All these story points influenced his character, as well as how he moves and interacts."

Elevating Landscapes

Race Across the City

Delivering motion and movement to Everest's wild trek across Yi's massive urban Chinese city were some of the more creatively head-scratching months of production for Culton's team. To find inspiration, the group of animators (and lifelong pupils) did what students have done for centuries: They took a field trip. "Early on in lighting, we went to the Museum of Neon Art in Glendale, California, to study reference and see how signs interact with white-fur samples," Edwards says. "We were inspired by this saturated-color palette and how all these big signs could interact with this giant city landscape."

As they were building and attempting to replicate a metropolitan city across multiple lighting environments and situations, the visual effects supervisor's crew had to

be strategic about their builds. “We did a lot of research on types of structures and signage that would bring believability,” Edwards says. “It was big kudos to our head of modelling Jeff Hayes, and layout and set-dressing teams—led by DAVE VALERA and executed by RHIANNON WILLIAMS—who put the city together.”

Once Culton and Edwards walked Rhiannon through the steps where Yi and Everest were traveling, and structural pieces Yi and her friends would find on their journey throughout the city, Rhiannon filled in the gaps. “She did a phenomenal job of set dressing these bits and pieces to give this perfect feel,” Edwards says. “From the apple carts and scooters to the air-conditioners and piping. Plus, surfacing, led by LISA SLATES CONNORS, added a whole new layer with the signage.” Throughout the course of production, the crew leaned on Pearl Studio for authenticity and expertise. “Pearl artists created a number of authentic advertising signs,” Edwards says. “We propagated those throughout the city. Lighting, supervised by our head of lighting Michael Necci, then took it to the next level. We had this tremendous art backdrop in terms of the color palettes.”

Canola Waves

Inarguably one of the most spectacular sequences in *Abominable* is the scene in which Everest’s magic allows Yi, Jin, Peng and the young Yeti to surf a wave of gorgeous canola flowers and escape from those with nefarious intentions. For the animators, they were just as surprised by the results as the characters asked to ride the florate-infused rapids. “When we started that, we had no idea what it would be,” Edwards says. “Even with the concept of ‘riding on a canola wave,’ we asked, ‘What’s a canola wave look like?’ Luckily, our head of effects [Jeff Budsberg] did a very early test in which he took a water simulation we had and propagated flowers and foliage on top of it. That simulation indicated what would and wouldn’t work, in terms of detail and motion.”

For this sequence, the animators borrowed as much from the properties of water as they did from snowfall during the Himalaya scenes. “One of our FX leads, MICHAEL LOSURE, started translating all of our water language into, effectively canola-flower language,” Edwards says. “This gave us a spray of petals and pollen-replicated water spray, and we had a certain weight that revealed the green underneath. We could also

track our heroes but feel the water weight, as well as big-foam characters of flower petals once the large wave was revealing. Even when the four principals are coming down in the last wave crash, we looked at a surfer references to make it translucent right through the wave; volumetric techniques replicated that through the canola to give the scene a nice ocean-wave feel.”

For director Culton and co-director Wilderman, the illusions created by the team exceeded all expectations. “The magic was all so whimsical and specific to this movie, all created from scratch,” Wilderman says. “Across the board, every department plussed it along the way. When we’d see the characters in lighting and it all came together, I was just blown away; it was better than I could have ever imagined. For example, when you watch these maverick fields of canola in a gorgeous landscape, and you experience this surreal monolith move through like a tidal wave? It was stunning. It’s so humbling to have worked with such an amazing crew.”

Bamboo Forest

The animation for Yi and Jin’s moving breakthrough scene in the bamboo forest was inspired by an unlikely source. To accomplish his envisioned intention, Edwards looked to one of his favorite films. “We were designing the set around an emotional moment,” says Edwards. “I love in *American Beauty* where cinematographer Conrad Hall shot a scene where the computer screen has reflection lines like prison bars. We wanted this isolated spot to feel almost like a prison for our two characters. To do that, we took away a lot of the color palette and made it monochromatic; that gave Yi this space to talk to Jin. It turned out to be this great little set, complete with layers of depth in stereo that feel incredibly intimate.”

Clouds of Koi

As our heroes inch closer to the Himalayas, Everest enacts his magic once again to allow them to soar above the land on billowy Koi fish comprised of clouds. If the visual effects supervisor thought turning canola fields into waves was a challenge, he never could have fathomed the hurdles concomitant with cloud Koi. “I mean, these were tricky!” Edwards says. “Similar to the canola waves, you talk about riding these fish

clouds but don't really know what that means. We did a lot of early tests with FX lead DOMIN LEE, prototyping how we would make it work. It was a lot of making sure that the fish shape stayed reasonably cohesive...yet ephemeral enough that they looked like they were clouds. Jill and Todd were very specific that if it was simply flying in the sky, it would feel too off, and not grounded enough."

Just as pondering neon signage helped to inform Yi's big-city home, so would examining the behavior of cumulus layers amid valleys dictate this sequence. "We looked at time-lapse footage of mountains where clouds would fill in these valleys and almost form rivers," Edwards says. "We decided to have a cloud river that the characters are almost 'swimming' up. That helped us to keep them grounded, not out in space. It also allowed for this effects interaction, and I think it became one of the most beautiful sequences in our film."

THE PRODUCTION DESIGN

Authenticity and Easter Eggs

Creating Modern China

It was crucial to the production that the film accurately highlight Chinese landscapes and culture, from the glistening buildings of the big city to the countryside, with beauty, artistry and precision. That process was divided equally between DreamWorks Animation in America and Pearl Studio in China. Production designer Max Boas would work with the team at Pearl Studio on specific design elements—like Yi's apartment and bedroom—and together, the teams would go to painstaking lengths to make it as realistic as possible. Boas and his team in Glendale, California, sought out the input and feedback from the team at Pearl throughout the course of production. This unique East/West creative collaboration between the two partner studios brought a vibrant China to life through animation as it has never been captured before on the big screen.

Culton and Wilderman went to China a number of times to immerse themselves in the nation's culture. "Our first trip was 10 days, and we spent it on a photo safari in the city and outskirts including river villages," Wilderman says. "On a couple of occasions, people would see this large group, and they would ask our tour guide,

Maxine, what was going on. They were so welcoming and would invite us into their homes. That happened at apartments in the city, as well as at a grade school and middle school. In one smaller village, this man invited us into his house and showed us around. It helped us so much with the design authenticity, and making our apartments and sets feel like the spaces in China where kids like Yi, Peng and Jin are growing up.”

The film is packed with little nods and grace notes to Chinese culture. For instance, for a scene near the end of the film, the DreamWorks Animation Glendale team had created a family dinner scene with Yi and her family. It was lovely, but the Pearl team immediately spotted an inconsistency: The table wasn’t nearly full enough. “Members of the Pearl team said, ‘No Chinese grandma would ever feed that little food to her family! You need four more dishes on the table!’” Chou says, laughing. “Then they’d shift out plates for bowls—it was an ongoing dialogue from early on all the way to the end to ensure authenticity and accuracy across the board. There are dozens of Easter eggs like that in *Abominable*, but what’s cool about them is that they’re not plot points...they’re just there because it’s authentic to a Chinese home—from food to games and bamboo scaffolding to scooters.”

Building the Cityscapes of China

Bamboo Scaffolds and Golden Arches

In *Abominable*, the city skyline is filled with details typical of a modern Chinese metropolis. Signs dotting the skyline advertise tea shops, popular international supermarkets (with imported goods), Huazhu Hotel (one of China’s largest hotel brands), authentic specialty food restaurants, and even McDonald’s. (Fun fact: China reportedly has the third most McDonald’s restaurants in the world—after only the U.S. and Japan.)

Despite how modern Chinese cities are, they’re also teeming with traditional elements. Bamboo scaffolding is still commonly used when renovating old buildings, for example. So, Yi’s building features this type of scaffolding, which both she and Everest use to scale the building. Traditional Chinese medicine shops—such as acupuncture, fire cupping and massage—are also common on the streets of big cities and can be glimpsed in the film.

Box Car Bonanza

Teetering Towers of Transport

When Yi runs across the street on her way home in one scene in *Abominable*, you'll see a car completely overloaded with boxes. These types of cars or bikes are still a common sight throughout the country. While people are buying cars in China faster than any other country in the world, it is still very common for families not to own cars. Instead, many opt for electric scooters (like the one Jin and Peng ride) or even bicycles, which they park inside their apartment buildings, and which eagle-eyed audiences can see in a scene set in Yi and Peng's apartment building stairwell.

Good Fortune, Upside Down

Inside Yi's Apartment

In China, one Chinese character you often see hung on doors is the character that means "good fortune." This character is featured on Yi's apartment door. In China, this character is often intentionally hung upside down. This is because in Chinese the saying, "good fortune is coming" sounds homophonically the same as "good fortune is upside down." So, there's a fun superstition that if you hang your "good fortune" character upside down, then good fortune will come to you.

In one hallway scene with Yi, Jin and Peng, you see red posters hanging around the door of one of the apartments. This is a very common sight within China because the words offer hope and wishes for the coming year. They are usually hung around Chinese New Year, but many people leave them up year-round.

Yi's apartment is full of things typically found in a Chinese home. Wall calendars are still a very popular item, and the filmmakers feature one in the kitchen—something Nai Nai surely put up. There is also a wall calendar in Yi's room—this one features a pig because *Abominable* comes out in the Year of the Pig (2019). A large water thermos and other tea-drinking accessories are also present—and their specific style and aesthetic would make any Chinese person feel right at home.

People in China never wear outdoor shoes when inside the home, but they are also almost never barefoot. Instead, they opt to wear house slippers that they change

into right at their entryway. The film features all our characters wearing these typical house slippers when they're hanging out at home—they can be seen most clearly in the last dinner seen of the film. In addition, Yi's hallway features a rack for outdoor shoes—a typical accessory right outside the front door of any Chinese home.

Dumplings to Donuts, Soup to Buns

Street Food and Good Home Cooking

Street food is always present in any Chinese city. They are foods that are sold off carts or in tiny shops that are right on the street. Classic favorites include cold noodles, lamb kebabs, youtiao (a Chinese donut) and pan-browned dumplings. The filmmakers are proud to feature all of these beloved Chinese street foods in the film.

Even though street food is delicious, the Chinese consider the best food to always be that which is cooked at home. Chinese buns are a bread-like steamed dumpling that can have a variety of fillings. In *Abominable*, these are Nai Nai's signature dish (beloved by both Peng and Everest!), and Nai Nai's specialty is pork buns. In the film, we see her cooking them by placing them in a steamer set atop a giant wok.

At the end of the film, Yi and her family sit down together at last for a homecooked Chinese dinner. This is a symbol of her family finally coming together. Family dinners are always shared family-style, and each person will have their own small bowl (no plates). The meal is typically quite plentiful, and it is common to have a greater number of dishes than people. In South China, dinner will usually be finished with soup, which is featured in the meal at the end of the film.

From Nai Nai's infamous chicken soup (placed at the center of the table) to her Coca-Cola chicken wings, to her bok choy with shitake and braised fish, to her braised prawns, garlic sprout pork, the table is a feast for the senses.

Games People Play

Rock, Paper, Scissors

“Rock, Paper, Scissors” is a favorite children’s game in China as well as in the U.S., so a scene where Peng is playing it with Everest on the train is definitely authentic to China. The filmmakers thought it would be a fun opportunity to integrate some Mandarin into the film and chose to have Peng say, “Rock, Paper, Scissors” in Chinese.

One insider fun fact to note is that in China, the game’s name takes on a slightly different order. So, when Peng calls out the game in Mandarin on the train, he is authentically scrambling the order to say, “Scissors, Rock, Paper!”

THE MUSIC

Fix You

The Healing Power of Music

Yi’s manner of expressing herself is through her music, and that’s ultimately what bonds her forever with Everest. She won’t play her violin for her family; she only plays for herself. Yi’s almost stuck in suspended animation, and that is her attempt to keep her dad’s memory alive. When Everest comes to her, because he’s wounded and scared, she grabs her violin to soothe him. But by helping him, what Yi is also doing is opening a crack in herself, which helps her heal in return.

Their shared musicality draws out the defiant spirit of both. In turn, Everest’s sound brings back the music in Yi. When he gives her Yeti hair for her violin string, he passes on the knowledge that she’s always had that power to heal herself. Composed by Rupert Gregson-Williams, who most recently crafted the signature sounds for *Wonder Woman* and *Aquaman*, the *Abominable* score is both gorgeously haunting and wildly uplifting.

For the score, Culton found a kindred spirit in her producer. “Suzanne and I share a bond in music, which is as big to her as it is to me,” says the filmmaker. “It’s the emotion of the movie, and it sets a tone. I’m so proud of the fact that we did a musical without breaking into song, but *Abominable* is ultimately a musical. With those components, Suzanne’s been such a great resource. We licensed the Coldplay song ‘Fix You,’ which was so perfect for the theme of the film.” The song is integral to the

scene where Yi discovers that her violin is broken. “Suzanne was able to bring STARGATE, the powerhouse producing team she worked with on *Home*, to give it a delicate twist.”

Buirgy explains that the music of the film is inextricable with its narrative: “Sometimes, when you’re listening to a record you think, ‘Today, this song resonates with me.’ Then, the next day, it’s another song. That’s how I feel about *Abominable*. There are so many different pieces of it that I can’t pick the one that is my favorite.”

One that rises to the top for the producer is when Yi discovers Everest on her roof. “The animators needed to animate to a theme,” Buirgy says. “When Yi is playing the piece where she’s trying to soothe Everest, the animation has to match exactly. You can have someone trace over an animation cell, but you’d lose the soul of it—even if you were exact in the execution.”

Not only did Gregson-Williams prove integral to bringing Yi’s theme to its crescendo, he complements the work of Joseph Izzo’s vocals by serving as the humming voice of Everest, which serves as countermelody to Yi’s theme. “Rupert is so lovely and incredibly talented,” says Buirgy. “He wrote the violin theme, and he enlisted a brother-and-sister team of violinists [CLIO GOULD and THOMAS GOULD] to play the music throughout so beautifully.” Of note, Buirgy appreciated the composer’s subtle use of guitars and the occasional synthetic sounds, as well as the deceptively humorous saxophone for Burnish’s theme.

Clio Gould celebrates the dedication from her DreamWorks Animation and Pearl Studio filmmakers to perfectly reflect the deft, delicate motions and lines of those artists in her line of work. “This is quite an unusual, lopsided position to spend your life in,” Gould says. “I’ve always felt that our bodies grow around the violin like a vine growing around a pipe. I understand that the animators were forensically analyzing how a violinist plays, because if it was *approximately* right then it wouldn’t have that wonderful feeling. It’s been an absolute labor of love, and everyone involved has been incredibly concerned to get those tiny details so authentic.”

The violinist, who has led symphony orchestras and chamber orchestras in her own right, shares that Yi’s signature sound is steeped in centuries of history. “I’m lucky to have been able to borrow an amazing Stradivarius,” Clio Gould says, “so that’s what

you're hearing on the soundtrack. It's a 300-year-plus-old instrument that's been doing its job for all that time. The violin is difficult, and not something that gives away all of its secrets very easily." She empathizes with her on-screen avatar, a fellow struggling string musician. "Every violinist goes through years and years of not making the sound they want," Gould says, "and then suddenly it all gels and then it gives so much back."

The filmmakers also brought in CHARLENE HUANG, who originally worked with SUNNY PARK in DreamWorks Animation's music department, to deliver reference for key sequences. "When Yi plays the violin by the Buddha, it's the most amazing sequence of animation," Buirgy says. "That and the sequence between Yi and Jin in the bamboo forest—supervising animator Ludovic Bouancheau and animator GUILLERMO CAREAGA created that."

The composer acknowledges that he's a massive fan of his collaborators, marveling at how seamlessly facile it appears for *Abominable*'s instrumentalists to ply their trade. "When Yi picks up a violin, you see her connecting to it, but when you see these guys pick up their violin, it's not a bit of work," Gregson-Williams says. "This is connected to them, and the vibrations and everything. The violin is a part of their lives."

One of Gregson-Williams' most cherished sequences in the animation is Yi's rebirth at the Buddha. He walks the reader through the scene, and the power of musicality therein. "When Yi and her friends arrive, there is nothing of color, nothing alive in terms of vegetation," Gregson-Williams says. "What Jill wanted, as Yi plays, was for the magic and the wonder of the violin piece to build and swirl. As the vegetation becomes life, the colors emerge. The piece had to reflect that, so Yi plays her violin gently to the tune. As the tune becomes more excited, then magic start to happen. The music travels over the Himalayas and delivers you home."

Gregson-Williams' intertwining Yi and Everest themes are central to the moment when Yi realizes that Everest has, without her realizing it, taken her to every place that she—and her father—wanted to go. "Yi realizes they've been on this journey," Culton says. "She thought they were lost, but now we have this feeling that Everest orchestrated this entire thing. It's why people get teary-eyed in that moment. We've waited and waited, and we've gotten to know this girl. She spills her guts to Jin, telling him that her family is so distant, and she doesn't know how to fix it. When Jin says,

‘Maybe they’re not the ones who are so distant?,’ Yi has a ‘heart-hit’ moment where she realizes she’s been the one causing this all along.”

Right after that sequence, our heroes realize they’re at the Leshan Giant Buddha, and Everest pushes the violin toward her. “Yi says, ‘I wish my dad could see this,’ and he’s pushing the instrument toward her,” Culton notes. “Everest is basically saying, ‘Play for him. Play. Let it go.’ Then, she does. You’ve been waiting for this moment. She couldn’t do that at the beginning of this film; she had to go through this emotional journey to get herself to that place.”

For Michelle Wong, who grew up playing piano and studying classical music, the nuanced decisions of the composer and artists were deeply welcome ones. “The sweeping classical piece Yi plays almost brought me to tears, it is so incredibly scored,” says Wong. “To hear classical music being composed for an animated film is so exciting. I have such a deep love for it, and you don’t get to see many animated movies utilizing this type of music—or for the main character to play this type of instrument.”

Not only did Gregson-Williams employ instrumentation, but the composer wove in a good deal of literal humanity into the *Abominable* score. A choir brought in the fantastical scene when Yi uses her violin to create her own magic, is accompanied by Gregson-Williams’ string arrangement of Coldplay’s “Fix You.” “This choir is part of the emotional backbone of the film,” Gregson-Williams says. “We’ve used them in more of the magical moments. In addition to Everest’s humming—which is the answering phase to Yi’s theme—there was something lovely, ambient and guttural about the addition of these human voices.”

DreamWorks Animation and Pearl Studio present *Abominable*, starring Chloe Bennet, Tenzing Norgay Trainor, Albert Tsai, Eddie Izzard, Sarah Paulson, Tsai Chin, Michelle Wong. Music for the film is by Rupert Gregson-Williams. The film is co-produced by Rebecca Huntley. The 3D comedy adventure is executive produced by Tim Johnson, Frank Zhu, Li Ruigang. It is co-directed by Todd Wilderman. The producer for Pearl Studio is Peilin Chou. The film is produced by Suzanne Buirgy, p.g.a. *Abominable* is written and directed by Jill Culton. © 2019 Universal Studios and Shanghai Pearl

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ABOUT THE CAST

CHLOE BENNET (Yi) is an actress, recording artist and activist, best known for her leading role as Daisy Johnson (aka Quake) on Marvel's *Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.*, which was recently picked up for its seventh season on ABC. A native of Chicago's South Side, Bennet grew up in a multicultural family consisting of her first-generation Chinese-American father and Caucasian mother, along with six brothers—three biological siblings and three adopted (two brothers who are African-American and one brother who is Mexican).

Bennet was educated in the Montessori system, where she developed a love for performing and singing. At the age of 12, she joined the Second City Youth Ensemble, studying acting and improv. A few years later, she was discovered by a music manager who immediately signed her and arranged for her to move to China, where she lived with her paternal grandmother and began intensive Mandarin studies in Shanghai. During this time, she began making regular trips to Sweden to record with some of the same songwriters and producers behind Britney Spears, Miley Cyrus, Celine Dion, Jennifer Lopez and Madonna, among others.

Bennet recorded and released her first single and video in China for her song, "Uh Oh." The song and the video were shot in English and Mandarin and went on to become hugely popular in China. Based on the success of her "Uh Oh" video, she was invited to perform at the Zebra Music Festival, a three-day charity event to benefit victims of the 2008 Sichuan earthquake. With over 30,000 people in attendance, the event was broadcast to more than 100 million homes in China. It was Bennet's first live performance, and she emerged as one of the most impressive acts on the bill. Her performance led to other opportunities and, most importantly, got Hollywood's attention.

In summer 2010, Bennet landed her first television role as a co-host on the TeenNick television show *The Nightlife*, opposite Nick Cannon. Bennet quickly transitioned to scripted work with a recurring role on the first season of ABC's *Nashville*

before joining the Marvel family later that year. Next up, Bennet will make her theatrical debut in MGM's musical remake of the '80s classic *Valley Girl*. She has also done voiceover work as Quake in Marvel Animation's *Marvel Rising* franchise.

Bennet recently co-founded Represent. Us. Now. (RUN), a new civic platform for the fastest-growing racial group in the United States: more than 21 million Asian American Pacific Islanders (AAPI). RUN is focused on building AAPI citizen power from the ground up through live events, creative campaigns and digital storytelling.

TENZING NORGAY TRAINOR (Jin) was born in Los Angeles, California, on September 4, 2001. Trainor started his acting career at nine years old, doing summer musical theater camp while residing in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He rose to fame on the critically acclaimed Disney Channel show *Liv and Maddie*, playing the role of Parker Rooney. He has also had roles in the FOX network show *The Mick* as well as a voice role in the Disney film *Super Buddies*. He is a highly accomplished martial artist with black belts in two forms. He is also an avid soccer player and hiker. He is adamant about attending regular high school and has several advanced placement courses. He intends to pursue a bachelor's degree in film and television production after he graduates from high school in 2020. He loves to travel and has traveled extensively through India, Nepal and Europe. If he had one wish, it would be for world peace.

ALBERT TSAI (Peng) is an American actor, known for ABC comedy series *Dr. Ken* (2015-2017) and *Trophy Wife* (2013-2014). He is currently starring as Fred on the Disney Channel series *Coop and Cami Ask the World* (2018-2019). At only 15 years old, the award-winning young actor has made his mark in the entertainment industry as one of the most-watched talents in television today, quickly becoming known for the dynamic characters he has brought to life on screen.

Tsai started his professional career at the age of nine. He made his television debut on the CBS hit series *How I Met Your Mother* in May 2013. Since then, he has starred on six network comedy series and made guest appearances on several shows including *Fresh Off the Boat* (ABC), *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* (The CW), *Hot in Cleveland* (TV Land) and *Benched* (USA). Tsai received rave reviews and multiple award recognition

for his breakout role as Bert Harrison on the ABC comedy series *Trophy Wife*, including a Best Supporting Actor in a Comedy Series nomination for the 2014 Critics' Choice Television Awards and The Breakout TV Stars of 2013 by *The Huffington Post*, Hollywood.com, and *E! Online*. Additionally, *Entertainment Weekly* named Tsai one of the 12 best child actors for his work on ABC's *Dr. Ken*.

Tsai was born and raised in San Jose, California. He discovered his passion for acting at seven years old, when he participated in a school play. When not working, Tsai loves to read, swim, surf, freestyle dance and go horseback riding. His favorite subjects in school are history, science and geography. Tsai is bilingual and speaks Chinese Mandarin fluently. He enjoys traveling and has been to many different places in the United States, Canada, Europe and Asia.

Already one of the most celebrated comics of his generation, **EDDIE IZZARD** (Burnish) has also developed an equally stellar reputation as a film, television and stage actor.

Izzard is currently on tour for his stand-up comedy tour "Wunderbar." The "Wunderbar" tour is on its U.S. leg with 42 dates across 26 cities. Upon completion, Izzard will continue onto the European leg of the tour.

In April 2020, Izzard will star alongside Laurie Metcalf in the Broadway revival of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* directed by Emmy Award nominee Joe Mantello.

Izzard recently wrapped shooting on Lionsgate's thriller *Six Minutes to Midnight* with Judi Dench in a script he wrote with Celyn Jones and director Andy Goddard. Inspired by real events, the film tells the tale of an exclusive English all-girls finishing school caught up in a Nazi conspiracy that could have defeated Britain before the war began.

Inspired by the 2010 Emmy Award-nominated *Believe: The Eddie Izzard Story*, Izzard recently completed his book tour celebrating his memoir, "Believe Me: A Memoir of Love, Death, and Jazz Chickens," which tells Izzard's journey as a young child who lost his mother and becomes an accomplished, multi-faceted entertainer and advocate. The book was on *The New York Times* Best Sellers list in July 2017.

That same year, Izzard also completed his extensive stand-up comedy tour “Force Majeure.” Launched in March 2013, the tour took Izzard to 29 countries on five continents including all 50 states in the U.S.

In film, Izzard was last seen in Stephen Frears’ critically acclaimed film *Victoria & Abdul* for Focus Features. Izzard plays the role of Bertie, Prince of Wales, who disapproves of the relationship between his mother, Queen Victoria (Judi Dench), and a young Indian servant (Ali Fazal) and tries to force the servant out of the Royal Household. Highlights from Izzard’s film career include *Rock Dog*, *Boychoir*, *Valkyrie*, *Ocean’s Thirteen* and *Ocean’s Twelve*, *Across the Universe*, *Mystery Men*, *Shadow of the Vampire* and *The Cat’s Meow*.

On television, Izzard was last seen in the Sony PlayStation Network superhero-fantasy and crime-noir series *Powers*. He also recently captivated audiences with his masterful performance as Dr. Abel Gideon in Bryan Fuller’s series *Hannibal*. Izzard also starred in and served as a producer on the critically acclaimed FX series *The Riches*. His other notable television credits include *Castles in the Sky*, *Treasure Island* and *Lost Christmas*.

His dramatic stage appearances include David Mamet’s *Race* and *The Cryptogram*, the title role Christopher in Marlowe’s *Edward II* and *900 Oneonta* and Peter Nichols’ *A Day in the Death of Joe Egg* in London and on Broadway, which garnered him a Tony Award nomination for Best Actor – Play.

Izzard has also achieved great success with his one-man shows, including “Stripped” and “Force Majeure.” He now tours his show in four languages (English, French, German and Spanish) and on the 70th anniversary of D-Day, in Caen Normandy, he performed his show “Force Majeure” three times, in three hours, in three languages—German, English and French, which were the three languages that the Battle of Normandy was fought in. All proceeds went to charity. His performance in “Dress to Kill” earned him a New York Drama Desk Award and two Emmy Awards.

Izzard made his West End stage debut in 1993 in his one-man show “Live at the Ambassadors,” for which he received an Olivier Award nomination for Outstanding Achievement. “Live at the Ambassadors” was followed by a succession of critically

acclaimed shows, including “Unrepeatable,” “Definite Article,” “Glorious,” “Dress to Kill,” “Circle,” “Sexie” and “Stripped.”

On March 20, 2016, Izzard completed running 27 marathons in 27 days in South Africa as a tribute to Nelson Mandela and raised over £2.6 million (\$3.3 million) for Sport Relief, a charity that helps improve the lives of people in impoverished countries. In 2009, Izzard ran 43 marathons in 51 days through England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland for charity and helped raise £1.8 million (\$2.7 million) for Sport Relief.

TSAI CHIN (Nai Nai) is a Chinese-born British actress, singer, director, teacher and author, best known in America for her role as Auntie Lindo in the film *The Joy Luck Club*. The daughter of Peking Opera legend Chow Hsin Fang, Chin knew from an early age that she wanted to act and left Shanghai at the age of 17 to enroll in the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) in London. Fresh out of RADA, she was cast in *The World of Suzie Wong* on the West End and shot to stardom, starting a career that has spanned more than six decades and three continents. Chin has appeared in two *James Bond* films, first as a Bond girl in *You Only Live Twice* and then, at age 73, as Madame Wu in *Casino Royale*. She has continued to work in theater throughout her career, including on Broadway as Eng Siu-Yong in the Tony Award-nominated *Golden Child* and has appeared in countless films, including *Memoirs of a Geisha*, *Now You See Me 2* and *Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.*

Chin is also well known in China, where she returned after the Cultural Revolution to teach acting at the Central Academy of Drama. After that first homecoming, she would go on to spend more than a decade as a cultural liaison between China and the U.K., working extensively in London, Beijing and Hong Kong. She is perhaps best known on the mainland for her portrayal of Grandmother Jia in the blockbuster 50-episode production of *A Dream in Red Mansions*.

MICHELLE WONG (Yi's Mom) is an on-screen and voice-over actor. A native of San Diego, she relocated to Los Angeles after acquiring a degree in drama from Carnegie Mellon University.

Wong got her start in television recurring as Nurse Tiffany on the NBC series *ER*, followed by roles on hit shows including *Private Practice*, *Scandal*, *Torchwood* and

Rizzoli & Isles. She also played assistant to Julia Stiles on the TNT pilot *Guilt by Association*.

Abominable marks Wong's first animated feature film, though her on-screen debut was in the Sundance Film Festival favorite *Dear White People*. In addition to voicing animation, Wong can be heard in blockbuster video games such as *World of Warcraft*, *Grand Theft Auto V*, *Fallout 4: Far Harbor*, *Call of Duty: WWII* and most recently as Commander Rachel Sager of the U.S.S. Galileo in the immersive VR experience *Star Trek: Dark Remnant*.

Wong has given her voice to many commercial brands including Honda, McDonald's, Woodbridge wines by Robert Mondavi, Glad, Old Navy, Volkswagen, Hyundai, Capital One, RITZ Crackers and Dunkin' Donuts. She also leads Sprint's ongoing campaign as the voice of Evelyn the robot, which launched during Super Bowl LII. Her voice has led various FOX Sports events such as the US Open, *Jeff Gordon's Daytona 500 Kickoff Celebration*, USGA Senior Open and multiple seasons of the popular pregame show *NFL Kickoff*.

Award-winning actress **SARAH PAULSON** (Dr. Zara) has built an impressive list of credits in film, television and on stage.

Paulson earned a Primetime Emmy Award win for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Miniseries or Movie for her portrayal of attorney Marcia Clark in the critically acclaimed mini-series *The People v. O.J. Simpson: American Crime Story* on FX. Paulson also received a Golden Globe Award, a Screen Actors Guild Award, a Critics' Choice Award as well as a Television Critics Association Award for this role.

Paulson was last seen starring in M. Night Shyamalan's thriller *Glass* for Universal, opposite James McAvoy, Bruce Willis and Samuel L. Jackson, and in Netflix's hit *Bird Box*, opposite Sandra Bullock, which has been watched by more than 45 million Netflix accounts. In mid-2018, Paulson starred in Warner Bros.' *Ocean's 8*, which opened at no. 1 in the U.S. and topped the opening weekend figures for each of the previous *Ocean's* films.

She can next be seen in Warner Bros.' *The Goldfinch*, which will be released on September 13, 2019, and will be starring in Aneesh Chaganty's *Run*, which Lionsgate will release on January 24, 2020.

On the small screen, Paulson was most recently seen in the eighth installment of Ryan's Murphy's award-winning television series *American Horror Story* for FX. In addition to starring as multiple characters that season, she also made her directorial debut with the 78-minute crossover episode, "Return to Murder House." Paulson has received five Primetime Emmy Award nominations for her roles in the franchise: Ally Mayfair-Richards in "American Horror Story: Cult"; Sally in "American Horror Story: Hotel"; Conjoined twins Bette and Dot Tattler in "American Horror Story: Freak Show"; Cordelia Foxx in "American Horror Story: Coven"; and Lana Winters in "American Horror Story: Asylum." She has also earned two Critics' Choice Awards for her roles in the anthology.

Paulson is currently in production for the upcoming series *Ratched*, where she will play the title role and serves as an executive producer. The series, distributed by Netflix, centers on the early life of Mildred Ratched from the 1962 Ken Kesey novel, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. She will also begin production on FX's *Mrs. America* later in 2019, in which she will star opposite Cate Blanchett. The limited series tells the true story of the movement to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment and the unexpected backlash led by Phyllis Schlafly.

Paulson received her first Primetime Emmy Award nomination and second Golden Globe Award nomination for her role as Nicolle Wallace in HBO's critically acclaimed telefilm *Game Change*. The film, directed by Jay Roach, follows John McCain's 2008 presidential campaign. Her first Golden Globe Award nomination was for her performance in Aaron Sorkin's *Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip*, in which she starred opposite Matthew Perry, Amanda Peet, Bradley Whitford and Steven Weber.

Paulson's additional film credits include Todd Haynes' critically acclaimed *Carol* alongside Cate Blanchett and Rooney Mara; Steve McQueen's *12 Years a Slave*, which received an Academy Award® for Best Picture; and Jeff Nichols' *Mud* alongside Reese Witherspoon and Matthew McConaughey, for which the cast received the Robert Altman Award at the Film Independent Spirit Awards. She also appeared in Stephen Spielberg's

The Post opposite Tom Hanks and Meryl Streep; Danny Strong's *Rebel in the Rye*; Alex Lehmann's *Blue Jay* opposite Mark Duplass; Fox Searchlight's *Martha Marcy May Marlene* alongside Elizabeth Olsen; Lionsgate's *The Spirit* opposite Samuel L. Jackson, Eva Mendes and Scarlett Johansson; Marry Harron's *The Notorious Bettie Page*; *Down with Love* with Renee Zellweger, Ewan McGregor and David Hyde Pierce; *What Women Want* opposite Mel Gibson and Helen Hunt; *The Other Sister*, which was directed by Gary Marshall and starred Diane Keaton and Juliette Lewis; and *Diggers* alongside Paul Rudd and Ken Marino.

On stage, Paulson last appeared in the Roundabout Theatre Company's production of Lanford Wilson's Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Talley's Folly*. She previously starred on Broadway in the two-hander *Collected Stories* opposite Linda Lavin; as Laura Wingfield in *The Glass Menagerie*, alongside Jessica Lange; *The Cherry Orchard* alongside Alfred Molina and Annette Bening; and Tracy Letts' critically acclaimed *Killer Joe*.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

JILL CULTON (Written by/Directed by) is an American film director and a 29-year veteran of animated feature films. She has made a career as an animator in both 2D and 3D formats, a character designer, visual development artist, storyboard artist, head of story, head of story development, writer, director and executive producer. Culton is considered to be among the first female pioneers who helped to further the medium of computer feature animation.

Culton earned her BFA in the character animation program at California Institute of the Arts, where she later taught advanced animation.

The first decade of her career was spent at Pixar Animation Studios, where she was an animator and storyboard artist on *Toy Story*, *A Bug's Life* and *Toy Story 2* on which she also designed the beloved cowgirl Jessie. Culton was the head of story development and credited with "original story by" on *Monsters, Inc.*, which continues to be one of the most popular films in Pixar's history.

Spending two years with Industrial Light & Magic, Culton was hired to help this strictly CG FX studio develop animated features. There she helped develop *Curious George*, along with many other projects.

Culton made her directorial debut on Sony's first animated feature, *Open Season* (2006). This cemented her place as one of the first female principal directors of a big budget, computer-animated feature. During her tenure at Sony, Culton also directed *Midnight Bun Run*, a short based on the *Open Season* characters, and executive produced *Open Season 2*. She was also integral to the development of *Hotel Transylvania*.

In 2011 Culton began working at DreamWorks Animation Studios. There she was hired to write and direct *Everest*, which became her passion, the story of a young girl and a Yeti. Over the course of several years, the movie grew into what is now *Abominable*, a co-production between China's Pearl Studios and DreamWorks Animation.

Though she has spent most of her career working in Los Angeles, Culton has always maintained a home in the woodlands of Marin County where she writes, sculpts, draws and finds inspiration by wandering in the redwoods and along beaches, usually with her big dog. Whether it's skiing in the mountains, surfing in the ocean or hiking in the woods, Culton says nature keeps her grounded and able to access storytelling in a clear and present way.

A veteran of 25 years in animation, **TODD WILDERMAN** (Co-Director) began his career as an animator and development artist at Sony where he worked on several films including *Stuart Little*, *Harry Potter* and *Open Season*. On *Stuart Little 2*, Wilderman worked on developing the lead characters' personalities as well as their designs. Wilderman's unique approach to his characters in his role as animation supervisor eventually led him to focus on story.

Wilderman co-directed *Open Season 2*, which was nominated for an Annie Award and earned him a spot as one of *Animation Magazine's* rising stars of animation.

Wilderman has spent the last eight years at DreamWorks Animation and contributed to films including *The Croods*, *Home* (as head of story) and *Trolls*. Additionally, he directed the short film *Almost Home*, which featured Steve Martin.

SUZANNE BUIRGY, p.g.a. (Produced by) has created an impressive roster of credits in her 20-year career in animation and visual effects.

Buirgy began her career at Digital Domain, one of the premiere VFX houses in the country, where she spent nine years serving as digital production manager on a variety of films, including *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, *xXx*, *The Italian Job* and *Peter Pan*.

After arriving at DreamWorks Animation in 2005, Buirgy jumped into the role of production executive and worked on a number of films in that capacity, including *Over the Hedge*, *Kung Fu Panda* and *Shrek the Third* before moving into the role of producer.

Buirgy was an associate producer on *How to Train Your Dragon* and acted as co-producer on *Kung Fu Panda 2*, which garnered an Academy Award® nomination for DreamWorks in 2012. Most recently, Buirgy produced *Home* which was released in March 2015 and starred Jim Parsons, Rihanna, Jennifer Lopez and Steve Martin.

Additionally, this native Californian spent a number of years on the road as a touring singer-songwriter. As a member of the all-girl band The Riveters, Buirgy played extensively in Los Angeles. She began her touring career after winning the prestigious New Folk Award at the Kerrville Folk Festival and co-produced three records as a solo artist. Her beginnings as an actress in the long-running musical revue *A 5-6-7-8* as well as a principal role in the first national touring company of the New York Shakespeare Festival's *The Pirates of Penzance* round out her eclectic career.

Buirgy draws upon her creative background and a degree from the University of Hard Knocks, adding her practiced understanding of both entertainment and production to the success of DreamWorks Animation films.

PEILIN CHOU (Producer) is the chief creative officer of Pearl Studio (formerly Oriental DreamWorks). The mission of Pearl Studio is to create world-class animated films that enchant, inspire and awaken global audiences. In her role as chief creative

officer, Chou oversees the development and production of all feature films at the studio, as well as the overall slate strategy, creative direction and mission of the studio. Chou also serves as producer or executive producer for all Pearl Studio films.

Throughout her career, Chou has held numerous creative leadership positions including senior vice president of programming and production at AZN Television (a Comcast cable TV channel), vice president of original series for Spike TV and director of development for Nickelodeon.

In the arena of live theater, Chou served as the company manager and artistic associate of the Roundabout Theatre Company, overseeing over a dozen different revivals and new works, including the Tony Award-winning productions of *Cabaret* and *Side Man*. Chou also served as the director of development at Livent, Inc., where she helped to launch the Tony Award-winning musical *Fosse*.

Chou started her career at the Walt Disney Studios where she was a creative executive at Walt Disney Feature Animation and Touchstone Pictures. She was part of the creative team that developed and oversaw the studio's slate of feature films including *Mulan*, *Phenomenon* and *Romy and Michele's High School Reunion*.

Chou was named to the 2019 Gold House A100 List of Top 100 Most Impactful Asians & Pacific Islanders. She also received the national honor of Outstanding 50 Asian Americans in Business by the Asian American Business Development Center.

Chou received her bachelor of arts degree in communication studies from UCLA.

TIM JOHNSON (Executive Producer) is an executive producer and director at DreamWorks Animation.

He directed *Home* for the studio, which was released in March 2015. Prior to his work on *Home*, Johnson served as executive producer on the studio's Academy Award®-nominated 2010 feature film *How to Train Your Dragon* and directed the feature films *Over the Hedge*, *Sinbad* and *ANTZ*.

In addition to his feature film and television work, Johnson worked on the DreamWorks Theatricals' production of the *How to Train Your Dragon Live Spectacular*, an epic arena adventure produced in collaboration with Global Creatures, the masterminds behind the worldwide phenomenon *Walking with Dinosaurs*. The world

tour of *How to Train Your Dragon Live Spectacular* debuted in Australia in March 2012 before coming to the U.S. in summer 2012.

Prior to joining DreamWorks Animation, Johnson worked for Pacific Data Images, where he co-founded the Character Animation Group and served as its creative director.

Johnson holds a bachelor's degree in English literature and astrophysics from Northwestern University. He has served for the last decade as a board member for LA Opera.

FRANK ZHU (Executive Producer) is chief executive officer of Pearl Studio and leads an executive leadership team focused on developing and creating extraordinary world-class entertainment content and experiences for consumers in China and around the globe. He was appointed to his current position in May 2016. Respected and recognized for his accomplishments throughout the entertainment industry, Zhu brings to Pearl a broad range of leadership experiences from some of the most significant and successful entertainment companies in the world, where he was involved or responsible for the creation of animated content, physical production, marketing, promotion, brand management and the full development and exploitation of the many ancillary businesses that entertainment franchises generate. Zhu is a founding member of Pearl Studio's corporate executive team and previously served as the vice president of the company.

Zhu has extensive experience in management. Prior to joining Pearl Studio, he co-founded the leading children's entertainment and media company in China—Taomee. He served as its executive vice president and in June 2011 successfully brought the company public. During his tenure at Taomee, Zhu was the chief producer of 300 episodes of the hit Chinese animated TV series *Mole* and *Seer*. Zhu also produced five animated feature films, which ranked among the greatest of all-time at the domestic box office.

Prior to Taomee, Zhu played a key role for the Disney organization working at The Walt Disney China representative office and later The Walt Disney Co. (China) for five years, where he was one of the first professional managers of The Walt Disney Company (China), ushering in the golden age of Disney's ancillary businesses in China.

During his time with the legendary company, he established Disney China's toys licensing business.

Zhu majored in marketing and graduated from Fudan University.

LI RUIGANG (Executive Producer) is the chairman and CEO of CMC Capital Group, a leading equity investment firm in the entertainment, tech and consumer sectors. CMC's RMB and USD funds have invested in many industry champions and emerging leaders in key sub-sectors, including film, television, sports, interactive entertainment, internet media, social media, e-commerce, local service, logistics, supply chain, artificial intelligence, lifestyle, retail and education.

As a leading media and entertainment conglomerate in China, CMC Inc. is known for its prominent strengths in an extensive lineup of multi-genre premium content, including film, variety shows, financial media, short video, music, fashion and lifestyle, sports, gaming, live entertainment and theater; and it is uniquely positioned on a broad spectrum of content-related businesses, such as urban recreational complexes, outdoor and indoor themed attractions, artist and sports agencies and cinemas.

Ruigang is a board of director of Creative Artists Agency, vice chairman of Television Broadcasts Ltd., chairman of Shaw Brothers Studio and board director of City Football Group.

Ruigang is the founding dean of School of Creativity and Art at ShanghaiTech University and a board member of the Special Olympics.

Previously, Ruigang was chairman and president of Shanghai Media Group and chief of staff of Shanghai's municipal government.

MAX BOAS (Production Designer) began his career at DreamWorks Animation in 2003 as a layout artist and background painter on *Sinbad: Legend of the Seven Seas*. He went on to work as a visual development artist on *Over the Hedge*, where he helped design locations, create production illustrations and color keys for the lighting department and design a plethora of props found in the suburbia scenes. Boas also worked as a visual development artist on *Flushed Away* and the Academy Award®-nominated *Kung Fu Panda*. Before designing *Abominable*, Boas served as art director

on the epic-adventure *Rise of the Guardians* as well as the acclaimed finale to the *Shrek* franchise, *Shrek Forever After*, and *Kung Fu Panda 3*.

Prior to joining DreamWorks Animation, Boas studied illustration at the ArtCenter College of Design in Pasadena, California, where he received a bachelor of fine arts degree with honors distinction in 2002. Before attending ArtCenter, Boas spent two years at the Kansas City Art Institute, where he studied illustration and received a general foundation in art. Boas graduated from Fairview High School in 1996 in his hometown of Boulder, Colorado. He was born in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1978 and spent his first five years in New Orleans, Louisiana.

PAMELA ZIEGENHAGEN (Edited by) was born in Sleepy Eye, Minnesota. She attended St. Cloud State University in St. Cloud, Minnesota, where she majored in mass communication.

Ziegenhagen moved to Los Angeles in 1980 where she worked in commercials, television and live-action features until 1995 when she started working at The Walt Disney Company's Disney Feature Animation. Finding her passion for editing animation, she was the lead editor on *The Emperor's New Groove* (2000) and *Mulan II* (2004) at Disney, *Open Season* (2006) and *The Star* (2017) for Sony and *Despicable Me* (2010) for Illumination.

Ziegenhagen was nominated for an American Cinema Editors Eddie Award for her editing of *Despicable Me* in 2009 and an Annie Award for her editing of *The Star* in 2017.

RUPERT GREGSON-WILLIAMS (Composer) was born in England and educated at St. John's College Choir School, Cambridge. The multi-award-winning composer works from his studios in both London and Los Angeles.

A truly versatile composer, Gregson-Williams has written the scores for a wide range of feature films, including the Oscar[®]-nominated *Hotel Rwanda*, for which he was awarded the European Film Award for Best Composer; the animated films *Over the Hedge* and Jerry Seinfeld's *Bee Movie*, receiving an Annie Award nomination for his

score for the latter; and the independent film *Love + Hate*, for which he was awarded the Reims International Composer Award.

Most recently in December 2018, Gregson-Williams wrote the original score for the hit film *Aquaman*, which was directed by James Wan and starred Jason Momoa, Amber Heard, Willem Dafoe, Patrick Wilson and Nicole Kidman.

In 2017, Gregson-Williams scored the blockbuster and critically acclaimed *Wonder Woman*, which was directed by Patty Jenkins and starred Gal Gadot and Chris Pine. In 2016, he scored the award-winning war drama *Hacksaw Ridge*, which starred Andrew Garfield and was directed by Mel Gibson and premiered at the Venice International Film Festival. That same year, he scored the international hit *The Legend of Tarzan*, which starred Alexander Skarsgård and Margot Robbie and was directed by David Yates.

For television, Gregson-Williams' most recent project is the limited series *Catch-22*, directed and executive produced by George Clooney for Hulu, which premiered on May 17, 2019. Gregson-Williams wrote the music for the series with his brother, composer Harry Gregson-Williams. He wrote the music for TNT's *The Alienist*, which starred Dakota Fanning, Luke Evans and Daniel Brühl, which premiered in January 2018. He also wrote the score for the original Netflix series *The Crown*, created by Peter Morgan, which premiered in November 2016 with the second season having debuted in December 2017. He received a Primetime Emmy Award nomination in 2017 for Outstanding Music Composition for a Series (Original Dramatic Score) for his work on the first season of *The Crown*. He has also composed the music for various other TV projects, including the Emmy Award-winning HBO series *Veep*, AMC's *The Prisoner* and Sky Vision's *Agatha Raisin*. He received a Primetime Emmy Award nomination for the 2001 telefilm *Jack and the Beanstalk: The Real Story* for Outstanding Music Composition for a Miniseries, Movie or Special (Dramatic Underscore).

Gregson-Williams has had a long association with Adam Sandler and has composed the scores for many of his films over the years. Their collaborations include *Click*, *Bedtime Stories*, *Grown Ups*, *Just Go with It*, *Blended*, *The Ridiculous 6*, *The Do-Over* and *Sandy Wexler*.

His other film credits include *Winter's Tale*, directed by Akiva Goldsman; *Made of Honor*, starring Patrick Dempsey; and *Thunderpants*, starring Stephen Fry.

His commercial and film collaborations have included working with Ben Folds, Mark Knopfler, Hans Zimmer, Skylar Grey, Lebo M., Junior Mambazo and Moya Brennan.

—abominable—



CAST

Yi	CHLOE BENNET
Peng	ALBERT TSAI
Jin	TENZING NORGAY TRAINOR
Everest	JOSEPH IZZO
Dr. Zara	SARAH PAULSON
Burnish	EDDIE IZZARD
Nai Nai	TSAI CHIN
Yi's Mom	MICHELLE WONG
Goon Leader	RICH DIETL
Yak Herder	JAMES HONG
Teenage Girl #1/Boy's Mom/ Female Customer	CHRISTINE LIN
Teenage Girl #2	KYM MILLER
Teenage Boy	JASON KO
Van Driver	TREVOR DEVAL
Dog Lady/Dock Worker	KAREN HUIE
Jin Impersonator	VIC CHAO
Merchant	FERNANDO CHIEN
Goons	VIC CHAO
	TREVOR DEVAL
	KAREN HUIE
	REUBEN UY
	DAVID SMITH
	WALT DOHRN
	ELIZABETH PAN
Everest Humming	RUPERT GREGSON-WILLIAMS

CREW

Written and Directed by	JILL CULTON
Co-Director	TODD WILDERMAN
Produced by	SUZANNE BUIRGY, p.g.a.
Producer	PEILIN CHOU
Co-Producer	REBECCA HUNTLEY
Executive Producers	TIM JOHNSON
	LI RUIGANG
	FRANK ZHU
Co-Production Liaison	CRYSTAL XIA

Music by	RUPERT GREGSON-WILLIAMS
Editor	PAMELA ZIEGENHAGEN-SHEFLAND, ACE
Head of Story	ENNIO TORRESAN, JR.
Production Designer	MAX BOAS
Visual Effects Supervisor	MARK EDWARDS
Head of Character Animation	JOHN HILL
Head of Layout	ROBERT CRAWFORD
Art Director	PAUL DUNCAN
Character Designer	NICO MARLET
Production Manager	HEATHER LANZA
Animation Supervisors	LUDOVIC BOUANCHEAU
	HANS DASTRUP
	KRISTOF SERRAND
	DAVID WEATHERLY
Head of Lighting	MICHAEL NECCI
Lighting Supervisors	MAX BRUCE
	SHAUN COLLACO
	SONDRA VERLANDER
	LIANG-YUAN WANG
Digital Supervisor	MUNIRA MOIZ TAYABII
Supervising Technical Director	JENNIFER J. PAN
Modeling Supervisor	JEFF HAYES
Surfacing Supervisor	LISA SLATES CONNORS
Character Rigging Supervisor	SANDY KAO
Character Effects Supervisor	DAMON RIESBERG
Crowds Supervisor	JAMES THORNTON
Head of Effects	JEFF BUDSBERG
Effects Supervisors	AMAURY AUBEL
	JAMES JACKSON
Digimatte Supervisor	DANNY JANEVSKI
Final Layout Supervisor	DAVID PATRICK VALERA
Supervising Sound Editors & Designers	ETHAN VAN DER RYN
	ERIK AADAHL, M.P.S.E.
Re-Recording Mixer	MYRON NETTINGA
Stereography	GAREN CALAC
Image Finaling Supervisor	CASSANDRA FANNING
Casting by	CHRISTI SOPER HILT, CSA
Additional Screenplay	
Material by	IRENA BRIGNULL
	WILL DAVIES
	AUDREY WELLS
Consulting Director	SHU HUAN
Chinese Adaptation by	DING DING
	BAO OU

Chief Planner	CINDY ZHOU
Mandarin Adaptation Executives	JUSTINIAN HUANG HANK ABBOTT LULU LAI
Planners	CHRIS LI FRESH ZHANG RACHEL ZHAO
Mandarin Script Adaptation Advisers	JOHNNY TIAN HU XIAOXIAN LIU YECHENG PHAEDRA WAN LU JIA

STORY – DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

Production Supervisor	JEFF KAYE
Story Artists	CATHERINE RADER MATT FLYNN ANDREW EREKSON AURRY TAN NELSON YOKOTA LOUIE DEL CARMEN GARY GRAHAM DANIEL TAL SHARON BRIDGEMAN LUKIC JOHN PULISI LEO MATSUDA AKI LEE
Production Coordinator	SHAYNA COHEN

EDITORIAL – DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

Production Supervisor	SHABRAYIA SALAS CLEAVER
Associate Editors	LISA LINDER SILVER ED FULLER
First Assistant Editor	SHERI GALLOWAY-BIGLEY
Assistant Editor	JAMES D. KIRKPATRICK
Additional Editors	SUSAN FITZER

Additional Associate Editors	MICHAEL ANDREWS MICHAEL LOUIS HILL MAURISSA HORWITZ BRET MARNELL
Additional Assistant Editor	NATALIA CRONEMBOLD
Production Assistant	EERIN L. WILLIAMS

ART DEPARTMENT – DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

Production Supervisor	DANIELLE DURAN
Visual Development Artists	CHRISTOPHER BROCK SÉBASTIEN PIQUET CELINE DA HYEU KIM RACHEL TIEP-DANIELS FLORIANE MARCHIX VY TRINH PETER MAYNEZ JASMINE TRUONG
End Titles/2D Compositing	
Artist	RICHARD RAMAZINSKI
Production Coordinators	HOLLY JANE KAWIECKI ERIC KIM ALEX WEISS MORGAN

ART DEPARTMENT – PEARL STUDIO

Visual Development Artists	JANE LI ELLE SHI ZEXIN QIU QI ZHUANG
Additional Visual Development	
Artists	ALEJANDRO DIAZ RUI WANG YUAN TIAN SONG YUSEN
Production Support	CAO JUE
Production Coordinator	RACHEL SHU

CHARACTER RIGGING – DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

Production Supervisor	ISABELLE FEINTRENIE
Character Rigging Leads	PETER FARSON

	DICK WALSH
	TOM MOLET
	JEFF WOO
Character Riggers	MARTIN COSTELLO
	HYOUNG-JOONG SEO
	YUKINORI INAGAKI
	MATTHEW TUCKER
	MARIETTE MARINUS
	CHENG-CHIA KEIRA YANG
	KOJI MORIHIRO
	JUNZE ZHOU
Production Coordinator	TARSUS JACKSON

MODELING – DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

Production Supervisor	ISABELLE FEINTRENIE
Modelers	MINYU CHANG
	JAEWON LEE
	JUAN PABLO CHEN
	JONATHAN LIN
	CATHERIN CUBILLAN
	ABRAHAM MENEU OSET
	CHARLES C. ELLISON
	GRAHAM OYOUNG
Additional Modelers	ISABELLA OMOHUNDRO
	TONY WILLIAMS
Production Coordinators	SHUO FENG
	TARSUS JACKSON

MODELING – PEARL STUDIO

Modeler	AARON FANG
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SURFACING – DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

Production Supervisor	ISABELLE FEINTRENIE
Surfacers	JEANNIE YIP CHO
	JEFF NICHOLS
	WOOJIN CHOI
	KIRTI PILLAI
	BETSY ASHER HALL
	SONDRA VERLANDER

	BRANDI JOHNSON
	JOHN WAKE
	BEN LIPPERT
	GENTARO YAMAMOTO
Production Coordinators	SHUO FENG
	TARSUS JACKSON

SURFACING – PEARL STUDIO

Surfacer	ZHUANG RAN
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LAYOUT – DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

Production Supervisor	MARINA SOTO ECHANIZ
Rough Layout Lead	MICHAEL COMFORT
Rough Layout Artists	DAVID BOHORQUEZ
	TODD JANSEN
	VICTOR ROBERT
	THEOPHILE BONDOUX
	SCOTT MCGINLEY
	PAMELA B. STEFAN
	GREGORY BREITZMAN
	ANDI ISAO NAKASONE
	JOHN VELAZQUEZ
	SCOTT CULLEN
	DAMON O'BEIRNE
	BRIAN WARD
	JUAN GONZALEZ
	JOHN PETTINGILL
	JASON WESCHE
Final Layout Artists	JC ALVAREZ
	ELLEN HARRIS
	RHIANNON LEFFANTA WILHELM
	STUART CAMPBELL
	BRIAN RILEY
Production Coordinator	RICHARD HANJOON KIM

ANIMATION – DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

Production Supervisor	ELIZABETH USSERY
Character Lead Animators	GUILLERMO CAREAGA
	MARCO REGINA

Animators

DAN WAGNER
NEDY ACET
ANTONY GRAY
TYLER PHILLIPS
LUIZA ALANIZ
THOMAS GRUMMT
ROBYNE POWELL
LAURENT CANEIRO
LAURA H. HAN
WILLIAM SALAZAR
JOSEPH CHONG
ANDREW HARKINS
HENRY SANCHEZ
ALBERT COLOMER
JOSEPH HOLMARK
ALEX FERREIRA SIMOES
DAVID COUCHARIERE
MARTIN P. HOPKINS
HARRISON SMITH
PATRICK DANAHER
STEVEN "SHAGGY" HORNBY
DANE STOGNER
BILL DIAZ
MAREK KOCHOUT
LIRON TOPAZ
ADAM DOTSON
PHILIPPE LE BRUN
RICHARD VAN AS
DANIEL EDWARDS
GARRETT LEWIS
KELLY VAWTER
RAFFAELLA FILIPPONI
SEAN MACK
RYAN VICIK
JORGE GARCIA
FREDRIK NILSSON
GREG WHITTAKER
BENJAMIN GIRMANN

	RYAN PAGE
	SEBASTIEN WOJDA
	PATRICK GIUSIANO
	OLGA PARSHINA
	JOHN WONG
	RAVI KAMBLE GOVIND
	YUNG PHAM
Production Coordinator	RAFE PARKER BLOOD
Production Assistant	KRISTEN NELSON

ANIMATION – PEARL STUDIO

Animators	KURT WANG
	YANG YANG

CHARACTER EFFECTS – DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

Production Supervisor	SYDNEY L. WEST
Character Effects Leads	ERIC WARREN
	BRIAN MISSEY
Character Effects Artists	DANIEL ARATA
	JOSHUA LABROT
	KELLY SHAY
	COREY C. BOLWYN
	MATTHEW LEISHMAN
	ANDREW SILVESTRI
	TED BOYKE
	JOSE LOPEZ
	WILLIAM SOKOLOSKI
	MATT BROWN
	CHRISTOPHER MICHAEL
	JOSEPH SPADARO
	KATY CALLAWAY
	LENNON MONTEJO
	KEMER STEVENSON
	KENT CHAN
	ALEXANDER PAZ
	JENNIFER T. VANMETER
	BRIAN CRAWFORD
	AMY SHIMANO REMBUSKOS

ANGELA WANG
JOHN DOWELL
STEVE REMBUSKOS
RON WILLIAMS
REGINALD AMUKOSHI EMVULA
MATHIAS RODRIGUEZ
HIN D'LUN WONG
ROB HOUSE
MAX RODRIGUEZ
JACOB ZIMMER
ROSE IBIAMA
PRADIPTO SENGUPTA

Character Effects Technical

Supervisor

ARUN SOMASUNDARAM

Character Effects

Technical Lead

KURT PHILLIPS

Character Effects

Development Lead

CHRISTOPHER DE ST. JEOR

Production Coordinator

RICHARD HANJOON KIM

Production Assistant

JESS ESCAMILLAS

CROWDS – DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

Production Supervisor

ELIZABETH USSERY

Agent Developer

JEFF SULLIVAN

Crowds Artists

KELLY WETZEL TALESNICK

TODD ZULLO

Cycle Animators

ALBERTO CORRAL

MEGAN KREINER

DAVID POLK

Production Coordinator

RAFE PARKER BLOOD

Production Assistant

KRISTEN NELSON

DIGIMATTE – DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

Production Supervisor

DANIELLE DURAN

Digital Artists

DANIEL J. BRICK

PAMELA HOBBS

DAVID BUI

JAMES A.J. MILLER

	JOE DICESARE
	HE JUNG PARK
	MILICA FEDELE
	JASON PETHTEL
	MIKAEL GENACHTE-LE BAIL
	PAUL ANTHONY RIVERA
	ELIAS GONZALEZ
	MARLA TANIGAWA
Production Coordinator	ERIC KIM

EFFECTS – DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

Production Supervisor	POLINA ALEXANDROVNA PAVLOVSKY
Effects Leads	DOMIN LEE
	MICHAEL LOSURE
	ALEX TIMCHENKO
Effects Artists	AARON C. ADAMS
	JIM KOONCE
	KIEM CHING ONG
	MIR ALI
	JOHN KOSNIK
	JOHN PATTON
	JOHN CASSELLA
	YORIE KUMALASARI
	BLAIR PIERPONT
	DEREK CHEUNG
	AIDEN KYUNGK LEE
	DOUG RIZEAKOS
	WES CHILTON
	LI-MING LAWRENCE LEE
	ESTEFANIA THOMAS
	KENT ESTEP
	TONG JASON LIN
	BAPTISTE VAN OPSTAL
	STUART D. GORDON
	JASON MAYER
	CHUQIAO WANG
	EMILY HARRIS
	ANTHONY MEYERS

	ANDREW WHEELER
	MATTHEW HEAD
	MARK NEWPORT
	MASAHITO YOSHIOKA
	SHYH-CHYUAN HUANG
	CHRISTIAN OLAN-GEDDES
Production Assistant	EMILY CIRILLO

LIGHTING – DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

Production Supervisor	MICHAEL LYNN
Lead Lighters	ARZAN BAGLI
	UDAI HARAGUCHI
	JAKE NICHOLS
	ARIEL CHISHOLM
	C. JIN IM
	RUPALI PAREKH SHARMA
	JONATHAN CISCON
	JOHN J. LEE
	PRIYES NALINCHANDRA SHAH
	FRANCESCO GIROLDINI
	DAVID LEWIS
	OSAMU TAKEHIRO
	SHANE GLADING
	LYNDON LI
	OZGUR USTUNDAG
	MATT LINDER
Lighters	ALLISON BROOKE BEANE
	KELLY KOAY
	HAJIME NAKAMURA
	AMANDA FUJITA
	RYAN LANG
	ESTHER PAROBK
	JUSTIN HOLT
	BRYAN J. LOCANTORE
	R.J. PEÑA
	KEVIN ICHING HONG
	MARC MACHUCA
	SHANE STERNSTEIN

	LOK MING HWA
	BRETT MCCONNELL
	FATEMA TARZI
	JEFFREY KASUNIC
	JOSE GUINEA MONTALVO
	EMILY WIMER
Production Coordinators	SHUO FENG
	MIRANDA GRANGER
	KRYSTAL MONTOYA
	JILLIAN BROOKE ROBERTS
Production Assistants	JESS ESCAMILLAS
	RICKY ROBINSON

LIGHTING – PEARL STUDIO

Lighter	HUANG QIANQI
---------	--------------

TECHNICAL DIRECTION AND DEVELOPMENT – DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

Lead Technical Director	MICHAEL KEVIN MURRAY
Specialist Developers	MICHAEL AMOROZO
	SAKSHI VERMA
	BRIAN WALTERS
Technical Directors	NOMISH BHARDWAJ
	JASON DENGLER
	DOUG RIZEAKOS
	TRAVIS CHEN
	LOK MING HWA
	ISABELA VICTORIA ROVIRA
	ADAM CHRYSTIE
	AMY SUN KWA
	S. THADDAEUS WASSYNGER
	BENJAMIN DEMANN
	MARGARET E.C. RIGOTTI
	TYLER WHITE
Additional Technical Directors	MATIAS CODESAL
	STUART MICHAEL DOBBS
	LISA CURTIS SAUNDERS

TECHNICAL DIRECTION AND DEVELOPMENT – PEARL STUDIO

Technical Directors	SATISH GODA JERRY MA
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IMAGE FINALING – DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

Production Supervisor	JEFF KAYE
Image Finaling Leads	STEPHEN MALLIA NIKHIL SINHA
Image Finaling Artists	EMILY ABELE JORGE HEREDIA MICHAEL JAMES BAULA DAMON MARTINEZ CHARLES COHEN TYLER OLD REYNA J. DELANEY NATHANIEL RODRIGUEZ JESSICA GRIMSHAW DAWN GATES WELLS
Production Coordinator	LEA ANTONETTE LORENZO IRLANDA

COLOR FINISHING – DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

Lead Colorist	GREGORY K. CREASER
Colorist	PAUL MCGHEE

PRODUCTION – DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

Central Production Supervisor	TRACY LARSON
Digital Color Production Coordinator	MIRANDA GRANGER
Central Production Coordinator	KELLI J. RUNGO
Stereo Coordinator	TIM KWAN
Assistant to Jill Culton, Todd Wilderman and Suzanne Buirgy	OLIVIA KERRIGAN
Production Accountant	DENNIS PARK
Assistant Production Accountant	HUONG LAN ROSS
Casting Associate	NADIA SHEEN

PRODUCTION DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT – PEARL STUDIO

Artistic Management	BOB MERCIER
	SABRINA RIEGEL
Production Management	TONY MATTHEWS
	BEN XU
	VALERIE QIAN
	LU QIONG
	ZHANG JING
	TIFFANY YANG
	BLANDER ZHANG
Rigging	CLARE ZHANG
	EDWIN NG
	DENG ZHENG GANG
	ZHOU JUN ZE
	LAI FU YU
	YANG MENG JING
	VIVIAN CHOW
	CUI JING
	EVAN JACOBSON
	ZHANG BO
Modeling	MYLES ASSETER
	DENNY JIANG
	JOHNNY XIAO
	CHU XIAOXU
	WANG XINYU
	CAO QI
	LIN HAN
	YUAN ZIYUE
	ZENG DAN
	XIE HAITIAN
Surfacing	JEONG WON CHO
	MIA LIU
	ZHANG YING
	FENG GE
	BAO JIANG PING
	CHEN YU ZHEN
	LIANG DONG
	WANG KANG

Effects	ZHANG CHAO JUN
	HUANG PEIZHI
	WANG LIKAI
	YAO JIA
	WILL JIN
	DOMINIC ZHU
	SHI MING
	MA KAOYANG
	ZUO XING
	ZHOU LINBIN
	ROCKEN QIN
	JULIEN DEPREURAND
	ZHANG PENG
	LEON LIN
Crowds	LI BOLUN
	MILES GUO
	REBORN KANG
	RAINA WU
Production Prep Animation	LIN LING JUN
	OLIVIER STAPHYLAS
	CHUNG CHAN
	ALEX LI
Lighting	PATRICK PUJALTE-A
	NI WEIWEI
	LI JUN
	XU CHONG
	WANG ZONG JIE
Compositing Character Effects	JACK CHEN
	PAOLO GNONI
	KYLE WOOD
	RACHEL YU
	TIGER WANG
Technical Directors	WANG TING
	DOMINIC DRANE
	CHEN GUANG
	SYLVIE CHEN
	WANG BIN
	VICTOR QIN

	GUI CHENG DONG
	LIAO HAILIN
	CHEN XIN
Matte Painting	TIMOTHY CLARK

CUSTOM ANIMATION – DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

Associate Production Manager	HENRI HOVHANESYAN
Production Coordinator	RICHARD HANJOON KIM
Associate Editor	MARGARET JOHNSON-HOLZENDORF
Assistant Editor	ARIN MATHERN
Final Layout Artist	MICHAEL GUTTMAN

POSTPRODUCTION – DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

Vice President, Postproduction	ANDREW BIRCH
Postproduction Manager	DAVID YANOVER
Postproduction Supervisor	JOSH WOOD
Postproduction Executive	
Assistant	ROSE SILURIK
Sound Designer	MALTE BIELER
Dialogue / ADR Supervisor	DAVID BACH
Sound Effects Editors	JASON W. JENNINGS
	TIM WALSTON, MPSE
	GOEUN LEE
Supervising Foley Editor	JONATHAN KLEIN
Assistant Sound Editors	JESSE ROSENMAN
	VERONICA LI
Foley Artists	ALICIA STEVENSON
	DAWN LUNSFORD
Foley Mixer	DAVID JOBE
Re-Recording Mix Tech	TIM LIMER
Re-Recording Stage Engineers	MIKE MORONGELL
	DAVE BERGSTROM
	PATRICK CUSACK

DREAMWORKS ANIMATION SOUND

Original Dialogue Mixer	TIGHE SHELDON
Sound Designer	RICK HROMADKA
Mix Engineers	KASPAR HUGENTOBLE

ADR Voice Casting	KEN GOMBOS
ADR Group	TERRI DOUGLAS
	VIC CHAO
	JASON KO
	ELIZABETH PAN
	ALEXANDRE CHEN
	JAMES KAU LEUNG
	VIOLET GRACE SCHAFFER
	DAVID JORDAN CHEN
	ROBERT G. CHIU
	REUBEN UY
	FERNANDO CHIEN
	CHRISTINE LIN
	JESSIKA VAN
	EWAN CHUNG
	LYDIA LOOK
	VIVIANN YEE
	TREVOR DEVAL
	KYM MILLER
	GWENDOLINE YEO
	KAREN HUIE
	JON OLSON
DI Conform Editor	JOE THYGESEN
Color Production Supervisor	ALLISON BERNARDI STAUTH
Supervising Post Technical	
Director	ARIANDY CHANDRA
Digital Imaging Manager	KYLE D. PASCUCCI
Digital Imaging Technician	JACK YOUNG
Postproduction Engineering	
Manager	STEVEN MODER
Editorial Systems Engineers	MICHAEL CADY
	ALAN FRANZENBERG
	KEVIN MULLICH
	PAUL PARMER
Post Department Supervisor	JOHN GELLER
Media Supervisor	ALEX CARDULLO
Media Coordinators	CHRIS HEWITT
	BRIANNA RIVERA

Production Assistant	NATHAN FREEMAN
Chief Projectionist	GENE GOINS
Projectionist	ISRAEL GONZALEZ-SANDOVAL
Video Transfer	KEVIN CLOEPFIL
	AMY K. CLARK
Postproduction Sound	
Services by	DREAMWORKS ANIMATION AND NBCUNIVERSAL STUDIOPOST

INSERT BARCO AURO LOGO

MUSIC

Supervising Music Editor	J.J. GEORGE
Music Editor	VICKI HIATT
Additional Music &	
Arrangements	EVAN JOLLY SVEN FAULCONER FOREST CHRISTENSON
Orchestrations & Score	
Conductor	ALASTAIR KING
Additional Orchestrations	RUPERT GREGSON-WILLIAMS
Score Recording & Mix	
Engineer	NICK WOLLAGE
Additional Score Engineer	RUPERT COULSON
Digital Score Recordist &	
Additional Mix Engineer	ADAM MILLER
Assistant Engineers	LAURENCE ANSLOW JOHN PRESTAGE
Score Editor	FIONA CRUICKSHANK
Librarian	JILL STREATER
Booth Readers	BEN FOSTER EMMA GREGSON-WILLIAMS
Orchestra & Choir Contractor	ISOBEL GRIFFITHS LTD.
Choir Conductor & Choirmaster	BEN PARRY
Choirmaster	TERRY EDWARDS
Choir Performed by	LONDON VOICES
Orchestra Leader	PERRY MONTAGUE-MASON
Featured Violins	CLIO GOULD

	THOMAS GOULD
	TOM PIGOTT-SMITH
Featured Bass	ADRIAN PEACOCK
Featured Cello	PETER GREGSON
Featured Guitar	ANTHONY CLARKE
Score Recorded & Mixed at	AIR STUDIOS, LONDON U.K.
Air Lyndhurst Scoring Crew	ALEX FERGUSON
	NATASHA CANTER
	ASHLEY ANDREW-JONES

PEARL STUDIO MANAGEMENT

Chief Executive Officer	FRANK ZHU
Chief Creative Officer	PEILIN CHOU
Vice President of Operations	CINDY ZHOU
Head of Studio	DAGAN POTTER
Head of Development	JUSTINIAN HUANG
Film Marketing Director	CHRIS LI
Head of Ancillary Business	FRESH ZHANG
General Counsel	CRYSTAL XIA
Human Resources Director	FAYE YE
Associate Finance Director	AMY ZHANG
Senior IT Manager	SINUX SHEN
Senior Manager, Corporate Communications & Social Media	RACHEL ZHAO
Pre-Production Manager	HANK ABBOTT

PEARL STUDIO OPERATIONS

Digital Operations	JAMES XIAO
	BOYUAN CHEN
	JOAQUIN PECHEUR
	RACHEL HUANG
	JILIANG ZHOU
Legal & Compliance	ALEX CHEN
	QIUCHEN WANG
	VICKY YU
Ancillary Business	ROY ZHANG
	FRED YANG

Creative Development	TESSA GONG
	DAVID ZHOU
	FANESA LIU
	IRIS SHE
	WILLIAM GOLDBERG
	LULU LAI
	SUSAN XU
	LULU ZHAO
	HE CHUAN
	JAMIE LAI
Finance	EDOUARD FAN
	JAQUELINE HUANG
	LYNNE LIN
	YAMA ZOU
	KATHY LI
	QUEENIE WANG
	CAROL WU
Human Resources & Administration	PENNY ZHU
	SAMMI ZHOU
	LEAH ZHAO
	GRACE YANG
	TRACY HONG
	TRACY HUANG
Corporate Communications & Social Media	SOPHIA SHI
	JALETTA KALMAN
Film Marketing	FAN XI
	GARDEN HUA
	MORS YANG
Special Thanks	VICKY WANG
	LANDY ZHAO
	RAMAN HUI
	STEVE ELZER
	PETER LI
	THOMAS HUI
	JIAMING WU
	YUANSHEN HU

CATHERINE YING
LI XIE
NAN ZHOU
SI WU

DREAMWORKS ANIMATION STUDIO MANAGEMENT

President, DreamWorks

Animation	MARGIE COHN
Chief Creative Officer	KRISTIN LOWE
Head of Global Production	JILL HOPPER DESMARCHELIER
Senior Vice President, Artistic Management	DARCI ZALVIN
Development Executive	CHRIS KUSER
Production Executive	TINA TSENG DUKE
Head of Character Technologies	RON O'NEILL
Head of Production Pipeline	DAN GOLEMBESKI
Head of Production Technology	MARKUS KURTZ
Director of Artistic Management	ROBYN MESHER
Workflow Directors	FREDRIK NILSSON ROB VOGT
Studio Department Managers	MORENIKE DOSU-ROTHERHAM CLINT W. HEIDORN RENE HARNOIS, JR. ANGELA LEPITO
Studio Associate Department Manager	MARIE LANZA
Studio Department Coordinators	IRENE GELLER MARTINA LOPEZ LYVIA A. MARTINEZ
Associate Production Executives	APRIL LAWRENCE MARY QUINN
Senior Manager Production Analytics	CANDICE FUNG

PRODUCTION PIPELINE

Principal Engineer	BEN GEORGE
--------------------	------------

Production Supervisor	RICH ETHAN AUSTIN LEE
Pipeline Leads	CHARLES ADAMS SREENIVASA ANEESHA PYDI
Pipeline Engineers	ALAN BLEVINS SEAN FENNELL JOSEPH M. LOHMAR BRETT JOAQUIN BRONSON DAVID ILLES ILIA LYONS KWESI DAVIS CHETHNA KABEERDOSS ERIC SCHEIDEMANTLE
User Experience	ETHAN KEFAUVER SEEHYUN KIM

PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGY

Digital Supervisor for Production Technology	ANTHONY TYLER
Supervising Technical Director	NOÉ MARTÍNEZ IBARRA
Technical Project Manager	HEATHER MOORE
Lead & Specialist Developers	CHRISTIAN BARRETT CHRIS EDWARDS ERIC MORSE STUART DOBBS IAN HENCKEL SEAN WALLITSCH BERNARD LEBEL
Production Technology Development	MOTOHISA ADACHI TOPHER HUGHES NOELI MURRIETTA JEAN-PAUL CARDIER WILLIAM HO BENJAMIN PEASE CHRISTIAN DUGENIO GYEDO JEON RYAN REEDE THOMAS S. ELLSWORTH

CHRIS KOTSCHWAR
ALLEN ROSE
KOLJA ERMAN
JACOB K. MELVIN
JOHN RUSSELL
STEPHEN GARVER
RYAN MORAN
SOUMITRA SAXENA

CHARACTER TECHNOLOGY

Character Technology

Development Supervisor

ARTHUR GREGORY

Character Technology Leads

TERRAN BOYLAN

MEGHA DAVALATH

TED FORGRAVE

Character Development

DAVID DRELL

ADÁN PEÑA

JEFF WOO

Project Coordination

JOHN PARSONS

BRIAN HONG

THANKS TO EVERYONE AT DREAMWORKS ANIMATION WHO SUPPORTED THIS
PRODUCTION

ANIMATION TECHNOLOGY

Chief Technology Officer

JEFFREY WIKE

Senior Vice President,

Strategic Alliance

KATE SWANBORG

Vice President, Global

Technology

ANDREW PEARCE

Technology Fellow

SKOTTIE MILLER

Senior Finance Manager

LORI A. ARNTZEN

RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

Vice President, Research

& Development

WILLIAM J. BALLEW

Directors

PAUL CARMEN DILORENZO

MARK JACKELS

Managers

ABBY THOMPSON
GREGORY S. HEFLIN
ROBERT KNAACK
SUELIKA J. CHIAL
RANDY PACKER
ANDREW VAN PERNIS
SARAH COUNNAS
MACKENZIE THOMPSON
BRENT VILLALOBOS
GREGORY ELSHOFF
DAVID TONNESEN
LUIS E. VILLANUEVA

Senior Principal & Principal
Engineers

JONATHAN EGSTAD
BRIAN J. GREEN
DOUG SHERMAN
BARRY FOWLER
TOSHI KATO
ROB WILSON

Technical Leads

MICHAEL BABCOCK
MATTHEW C. GONG
MATTHEW LOW
DAVID GARDNER
JONATHAN LANZ
BRETT SCHLANK
JIM LEUPER

Layout Engineers

RAVI JAGANNADHAN
QUOC TRAN

Animation & Rigging Engineers

CHAD ATA
ANSON CHU
DAVID SAELMAN
ANDREW D. BROWN
SHENYAO KE
BRYAN SMITH
STUART BRYSON
BEN H. KWA
MARC A. SORIANO
ZACHARY CARTER

	KIRK LANSMAN
	HENRY STEINBECK
	NHI HUA CASEY
	JOSE JUAN MEDINA
	CHI-WEI TSENG
	RIVA YU-HSIN CHANG
	PIA MINIATI
	VITALIY ZAVESOV
	BARATHY RANGARAJAN
Rendering & Shading Engineers	SCOTT CEGIELSKI
	CONRAD EGAN
	MARIANNA H. NEUBAUER
	MIKE DAY
	KEITH JEFFERY
	BRUCE N. TATAGLIA
	PRIYAMVAD DESHMUKH
	JEFFREY MAHOVSKY
	RON WOODS
CFX & FX Engineers	PETER CHENG
	ANDRE PRADHANA
	MATT TITUS
	PETER CUCKA
	IBRAHIM SANI KACHE
	KATHLEEN TOTH
	ROBERT TESDAHL
Lighting Engineers	ALEXANDER GERVESHI
	NIEL LOPEZ
	BILL SPITZAK
	ALI KOUHZADI
	TONY LU
Production Services Engineers	GINA Y. CHEN
	MANTAT LAM
	JUSTIN WEI-KAI TANG
	MATTHEW DAVIES
	MICHAEL SVIHURA
Media & Editorial Engineers	MIKE BECKER
	JOSEPH DAGG
	JOSH BURNELL

Configuration Management
Engineers

JASON KANKIEWICZ

JEFFREY BRADLEY
PETER C. MILLER
MARGARET A. DECKER
TOM STAPLES

Distributed Computing &
Analytics Engineers

RYAN AMUNDSON
DANNY HENDARGO
CHENG-JUI YU
ELIZABETH CHADDOCK
COLLIN MEHRING

SERVICE OPERATIONS

Vice President, Service
Operations
Director
Managers

MARK M. TOKUNAGA
DONALD R. HIBBARD
DANNY GALLO HAHN
ERNESTO ANTONIO QUIROZ II
MIKE PACE
JASTEN WINE

Senior Principal Engineer
Supervisors

CAROL J. SHIMABUKURO CHOY
ALAIN ANTON BANAS
CARRIE LA RESE HUGHES
JAMIE J. POULOS
JORGE GONZÁLEZ
JULIA LOPEZ

System Operations

NICHOLAS ABRAHAN
ALAN FRANZENBURG
ALEX SHANDI
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WILLIAM GRAY
STEVEN SIEBE
BRIAN T. BULLARD
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	JORDAN MYERS
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Digital Resources	AUSTIN CASALE
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	JONATHAN RUNKEL
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	KAYLA MOURIZ
	ENRIQUE SALDÍVAR
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	ROENYL LESLEY TISOY
	ELKEER PRATT
Audio Visual Engineering	MAURICIO "MARTY" BRENES
	KEITH HERNANDEZ
	WEN-PO BOBBY LEE
	MICHAEL S. CORONADO
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Services & Infrastructure

Directors

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SCOTT CHAPIN

RICHARD F. RUBIO

ALI ZAIDI

Managers

BALAJI ALAHARI

SHARIS ARAKELIAN

KEITH MCKAY

Big Data & Analytics	AHMAD M. ALKILANI
	ROBERT BELL
	M. UMAIR MUFTI
	HEIG GREGORIAN
	DENNIS DUONG
Data Services	MICHAEL JULES
	VENKATA SAI GOPI KRISHNA HARI
	DAVID KHUDAVERDYAN
	NAVEEN KUMAR EPPA
	RAJESH RAGHAVAN
Platform Engineering	ARA ZARIFIAN
	MARK LELLES
	DEVENDRA SHAH
	SEAN CHEN
	ANES KHALIFA HADREZ
System Engineering	JONATHAN MURALLES
	TIMOTHY GO
	MARK MAGALING
	ZICHENG WANG
	MICHAEL K. BASSLER
Storage & Data Center Engineering	EVAN S. McANULTY
	BRIAN URRUTIA
	VICTOR H. GUEST
	RAFFI PARIKIAN
	ROGELIO YAÑEZ
Network Engineering	SEAN D. SELLERS
	CHRISTOPHER CASSANO
	DAVID LIEBLING
	JOHN SAVAGE
	JIMMY CASTANEDA
Project Management	REZK HAKIM MEKHAEL
	KANNAN SUBBURAYAN
	GLENN LAMB
	RAUL RODRIGUEZ
	LAUREN L. BOND
	GLENN A. KELLY

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Strategy & Emerging

Technology

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Motion Capture Technology

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ELVIN KORKUTI

LARA SUMERA SAMMS

DEMIAN GORDON

KRISTINE MIDDLEMISS

SARAH SCIALLI

ANDREW HANSON

ASHWIN NAGAVELLI

ROBERTO SMITH

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Manager

BRENT CHRISTO

Supervisors

NATHALIE GALLEGOS

JORDAN WRAY

TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT

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MEG BROWN

CHRIS DE ZORZI

NUBIA BLANCO

GARY COZINE

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KATHLEEN MACKENZIE-GRAHAM

LINDA CATHERINE POWERS

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MARTHA P. SANCHEZ-QUINONEZ

NATALIE STONE

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SAM HINTON

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ADRIENNE MOSS

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& Training

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Custom Animation

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MICHELLE GOLDMAN
DEBBIE LUNER
DAVID BYNDER
MICHAEL GARCIA
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LIZ CAMP
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TEDDY BEAR THE PORCUPINE
JEFF SNOW
ABHIJAY PRAKASH
BEVAN WANG
BRANDON C. WILLIAMS

SONGS

“GIRL’S GOTTA”

Written by Andrew Bissell, Amy Stroup
Performed by Danger Twins
Courtesy of Peer-Southern Productions, Inc.

“DREAMS”

Written by Philip Beaudreau, Andrew Bissell
Performed by Philip Beaudreau
Courtesy of Peer-Southern Productions, Inc. and Phil Beaudreau

“WHOOOMP! (THERE IT IS)”

Written by Stephen Gibson, Cecil Glenn

“FIX YOU (VERSION FROM THE MOTION PICTURE *ABOMINABLE*)”

Written by Christopher Martin, Guy Berryman, Jonathan Buckland, William Champion
Performed by Coldplay
Additional production by Stargate Choir performed by Sonia Jones Singers
Strings & Choir arranged by Rupert Gregson-Williams
Courtesy of Parlophone Records Ltd.
By arrangement with Warner Music Group Film & TV Licensing

“BEAUTIFUL LIFE (FROM THE MOTION PICTURE ABOMINABLE)”
Written by Bleta Rexha, David Saint Fleur, Samuel James Zammarelli,
Nicholas Black, Christopher Tempest
Performed by Bebe Rexha
Produced by David Saint Fleur
Courtesy of Warner Records

Soundtrack Available on Back Lot Music
Back Lot Music Logo here

Animated with
The logo for 'premo' is written in a lowercase, rounded, sans-serif font. A horizontal line is positioned below the letters 'premo'.

Rendered with
The logo for 'MOONRAY' features the word in a tall, condensed, uppercase sans-serif font. A stylized crescent moon is positioned behind the letter 'O'.

Supervised by China Film Co-Production Corporation

** Insert Soundtrack Logo here**

** Insert Deluxe Logo here**

** Insert Dolby Atmos Logo here **

** Insert Avid Logo here**

MPAA Logo
52124

** Insert IATSE Logo here **

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Universal Logo

** Insert DreamWorks Animation Logo **

Insert Pearl Logo

** Insert Universal Tour Tag Logo **

Rating = PG

Credits as of August 8, 2019.